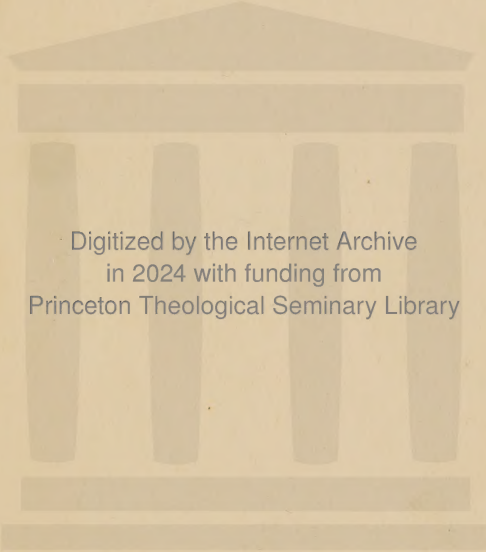


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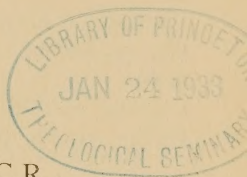
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THE SPIRIT OF WISDOM  
LOVE, AND POWER

INSTRUCTIONS AND MATERIAL FOR  
MEDITATION

BY

✓  
PAUL B. BULL, C.R.

MIRFIELD



NEW YORK  
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# THE SPIRIT OF WISDOM, LOVE, AND POWER

## INTRODUCTION

BEFORE offering material for Meditation on the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit, it is necessary to state certain ideas which will dominate the whole, and to define some terms.

### 1. THE EVER-BLESSED TRINITY.

In the unity of the Godhead there are three Persons. By the word "Person" applied to God we mean as much as, and much more than, when we use the word of man. We mean that God is not some impersonal force or energy, but that at least He loves and thinks and wills. Beyond this, Divine Personality may have infinite functions and energies unknown to man. We do not think of the three Persons in One God as separable individuals. "Wherever the Father acts He acts through the Son, whether in creation or redemption, and by the Spirit. Wherever the Son acts it is the Father who is acting in Him; and when He sends the Spirit, the Spirit in His coming brings the Son and the Father." But we associate some form of activity with each Person by special emphasis.

### 2. IMMANENCE AND TRANSCENDENCE.

People often think of the relation of God to the Universe as though it were like a great man looking at a number of oranges rolling around on a table—a purely external relationship. But St. Athanasius teaches

us that God is to the universe as your Soul is to your Body. Your soul is not shut up in your body as in a prison. Your soul penetrates your body to its furthest finger-tips; it integrates, or holds together in one, all the chemicals and cells of which your body is composed; it animates the whole, but the whole does not contain it. The soul reaches far out above and beyond the fixed limits of the body. You can play about among the stars, and to some extent control the forces of the world by the power of your thought.

So we believe that God is immanent in the Universe, or, more correctly, that the Universe only exists in Him. In Him it "consists" or holds together. He upholds the tiniest flower and the farthest star in being. But He is not shut up in the Universe. Above and beyond it and before it came into being God, the Ever-blessed Trinity, was in an Eternity of Fellowship, Light, and Love. He is the All-Ruler—Pantokrator—who overrules the Universe to the fulfilment of His will. In the phrase of St. Athanasius, "The Universe is the Body of God"

### 3. NATURAL AND SUPERNATURAL.

The natural is that which is in accordance with the true nature of a thing, its end or the purpose with which God created it. So in an ever-fluctuating universe we discern two activities: the Natural—the energising of those forces which God implanted in created things for the fulfilment of their end; the Supernatural—the energising of a Power which is not included in the sum-total of created things. Both are of God; but the distinction will sufficiently indicate the twofold work of the Holy Spirit, as He energises in and animates the natural, and guides, stimulates, inspires, indwells, and controls creation to the fulfilment of God's Will.

Science is the unveiling of God's will in that which can be measured. Values, purposes, ends, love, cannot be measured, and so lie beyond the scope of science.

Religion includes all that science can teach us. It embraces also all the values human and divine, and the unveiling of God's Being and Character in inspiration and revelation.

Science works only in the world of the phenomenal—the things which appear—and so deals only with secondary causation and knows nothing of ultimates. It works by abstraction and therefore can know nothing of reality as a whole. It can observe, describe, and measure the work of the Spirit of Life in the phenomenal world. But the supernatural activities of the Holy Spirit are beyond its scope. This is a serious defect of the scientific method. By its necessary abstraction it often omits some important and even decisive factor: so that the truth of its abstractions may not correspond at all with the truth of the whole.

The purpose of this book is primarily to provide material for a prayerful study of the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit. In a few cases the notes have been given in the actual form of a meditation. But this has been done in only a few examples as it is most desirable that every soul shall make its own meditation for itself. In the revived devotion of recent years we note a real peril of formalism in Mental Prayer. People adopt some form or scheme of Meditation, and then try to force their subject and their thoughts into this scheme, with the result that much of the truth and beauty of the subject is lost, and the soul loses its freedom of communion with God in its anxiety to conform to the intricate mechanism of its scheme. The prayerful reading of the Bible is often more profitable than the rigid adherence to a form or scheme of Meditation.

The subject of the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit has engaged the attention of many great scholars in recent years, and little remains to be done from the point of view of pure scholarship. But when we have, with gratitude, learned all we can from these scholars

we must try to interpret it into the terms of daily life. It has not been sufficiently recognised that we cannot adequately deal with this subject with the critical apparatus which is appropriate in dealing with history and the events which lie entirely in the past. The Holy Spirit is a living present Person energising today in the universe and His power is at work within us as we read and write. If we desire to learn more about Him, we must approach Him with reverence and love, and pray to become more sensitive to His influence, inspiration and guidance, and that our weakness may be reinforced with His strength. It has become a bad habit with some persons to treat God as a Problem rather than as a Person, and this is a method of approach which makes failure inevitable. We have at certain points used some of the phrases of evolution as the best way of describing the method by which things came to be. But while evolution describes a process it by no means suggests a cause. Dr. G. Geley, the Director of the Institut Metapsychique International in Paris, and a school of French Scientists maintain that the materialistic and mechanistic interpretations of nature are quite untenable, and that scientific evidence forces on us "the necessity of admitting a superior organising, centralising, and directing dynamism," which "itself obeys a directing idea" (*From the Unconscious to the Conscious*, Gustave Geley, pub. Harper and Bros., Trans. 1920, pp. 65, 66). While they do not recognise this dynamism and idea as the Holy Spirit, their witness seems to be a step in the right direction and a rational justification for that faith in the Holy Spirit, that "superior organising, centralising, and directing dynamism obeying a directing idea," whose activities are suggested in this book as a subject for prayerful reflection.



# PART I

## THE SPIRIT OF WISDOM

---

### I. THE SPIRIT IN CREATION

#### BROODING OVER CHAOS.

*Gen. i. 3:* "The Spirit of God was brooding upon the face of the waters: and God said, Let there be light, and there was light."

*Read:* Ps. xxxiii. 6, Isa. xlii. 5 and xlv. 18, St. John i. 1-5, Acts xiv. 15, and Heb. i. 1, 2.

God creates the Universe through the Son and by the Spirit. Out of the mystery of the Divine Being He calls it into existence. This is absolute creation.

Therefore God has absolute dominion over all things. Our first duty is to adore God our Creator in the mystery of His being. We shall never know Him exhaustively as we know finite things. "Clouds and darkness are round about Him. Righteousness and judgment are the foundations of His throne" (Ps. xcvii. 2). But we may know enough to love Him. The Mysteries of the Divine Being become mysteries of light as the Holy Spirit illuminates them to us. He dwells "in light unapproachable" (1 Tim. vi. 16).

"O God of the fathers, and Lord who keepest Thy mercy, who madest all things by Thy Word, and by Thy Wisdom Thou formedst man, that he should have dominion over the creatures that were made by Thee, and rule the world in holiness and righteousness, and execute judgment in uprightness of soul; give me wisdom, her that sitteth by Thee on Thy throne" (Wisdom ix. 1).

## II. HOW GOD CREATES

It is not known to us how God created the world. Science can tell us absolutely nothing of the ultimate nature of matter, mind, or energy. All she can do is to observe and describe the way in which they work. Whether we meditate on the stars or the atoms, we find infinite extension above and beyond and within and beneath. The atom is described as containing a solar system of its own. There are no fixed limits to our knowledge; the mind of man is perpetually discovering new horizons. We know only a few links in infinity, and even then our knowledge is only relative, and has to be corrected with each expansion of our horizon. But God always meets us where we are. We observe in ourselves a power of secondary creation—that is, we are able by our desire so to arrange and combine things and forces as to cause that to be or to occur which would not have been if we had not desired it. We can create in many ways.

## 1. BY INITIAL IMPULSE.

The thrower of the ball at baseball, called the “pitcher,” can give it such a twist as it leaves his hand that at a certain fixed distance it will swerve up or down, or to the right or left. He causes this swerve to take place by combining the speed of the ball, the resistance of the atmosphere, and the particular manner of rotation, in such a way that at the distance fixed by his desire the slackening speed will enable the swerve to take place.

## 2. BY COMBINATION OF NATURAL FORCES.

A clockwork mechanism will so regulate the conjunction of chemicals in a bomb that an explosion will occur at a fixed moment and fulfil our will.

## 3. BY REARRANGEMENT OF LOCATION.

A man walking by the sea can, with his finger, so rearrange the grains of sand that they convey a message

from mind to mind, and may change the history of the world, if someone following him reads the message. Yet nothing has been added to them, or taken from them, nor has any normal law of their being been violated.

#### 4. BY IMMANENT CONTROL.

Our mind, to some extent, can so act on the brain cells and nerves and muscles of our body as to express our thought and feeling. This action is twofold. Sometimes it is conscious and deliberate, and sometimes subconscious. When we sleep the blood still circulates, and we go on breathing. When experience teaches us that a certain combination of actions is good or useful, as soon as possible we relegate it to the unconscious, as in the 300 muscles used in walking, or in the innumerable actions and reactions which balance us in riding a bicycle, which are at first conscious and deliberate, then pass by the formation of habit and reflex action into the unconscious.

In some such ways as these and many others the Holy Spirit calls into being, and moves and moulds and controls the Universe to express the thought and will of God.

Out of the depth of God's being His thought becomes the Word, and the Word becomes a Deed, and the Universe is created. His is the initial impulse which gave to the Universe its first upward movement, as potential energy first became kinetic and began to weave itself into innumerable forms.

" O God, Creation's secret force,  
Thyself unmoved, all motion's source."

He implants in everything the law of its being and the energies necessary to fulfil its destiny. "Yielding seed after its kind" (Gen. i. 11).

" Thou from the first  
Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread  
Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast abyss  
And mad'st it pregnant."

And all was good. "God saw that it was good" (Gen. i. 12). Christian philosophy sees the Universe as a sacrament of God's life and will. The background of the Universe is good, and love is the fountain from which it sprang into being.

*Wis.* xi. 24: "For thou lovest all things that are.

And abhorrest none of the things which Thou didst make;

For never wouldst Thou have formed anything if Thou didst hate it.

And how would anything have endured, except Thou hadst willed it?

Or that which was not called by Thee, how would it have been preserved?

But Thou sparest all things because they are Thine, O Sovereign Lord, Thou lover of men's lives."

#### AN ACT OF PRAISE.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord God of our Fathers:

Praised and exalted above all for ever.

Blessed art Thou for the name of Thy Majesty:

Praised and exalted above all for ever.

Blessed art Thou in the Temple of Thy Holiness:

Praised and exalted above all for ever.

Blessed art Thou that beholdest the depths and dwellest between the Cherubim:

Praised and exalted above all for ever.

Blessed art Thou on the Glorious Throne of Thy Kingdom:

Praised and exalted above all for ever.

Blessed art Thou in the Firmament of Heaven:

Praised and exalted above all for ever.

Blessed art Thou in all Thy creatures.

*(Adapted from "Song of the Three Children".)*

"Worthy art Thou, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory and the honour and the power, for Thou didst create all things, and because of Thy will they were, and were created" (Rev. iv. 11).

## III. BEFORE THE DAWN

*St. John i. 1:* "In the beginning was the Word."

## NATURE.

There is a wholesome Christian agnosticism which realises that there are many things we cannot know. We know that the chemical constituents of our world act and react on one another in a certain way. We do not know why they do so. All we can say is that it is their nature to do so. We can only say that we observe the energising of those forces which God implanted in created things for the fulfilment of their end. The will of God has given this element of stability to the fluctuating Universe, a basis of necessity. Meditate on the Universe as it must have been before life appeared—on the countless millions of the stars and solar systems, on the age-long silence of interstellar spaces. Recently, through a vast telescope which revealed a space in the sky about equal to the moon, thirty-six solar systems have been observed. Feel the awe of such immensity, and pray that holy fear may deliver you from levity and frivolity in the Presence of Him who holds the stars in His hand, the Eternal Mind or Logos.

## CONVERSE WITH GOD.

1. *The Voice of the Father.* Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? (Job xxxviii. 4, 7).

*The Voice of a Son.* I was in Thy heart, Lord.

2. *Father.* Canst thou number the stars?

*Son.* Yea, Lord, as many as Thy mercies.

3. *Father.* Canst thou measure the heavens?

*Son.* Yea, Lord, as wide as Thy love.

4. *The Son.* Lord, I beseech Thee, if I have found favour in Thy sight, show me the vision of the dawn.

*The Father.* I am that I am. In the beginning when the earth was made, before the outgoings of the world were fixed, or ever the gatherings of the winds blew, before the voices of the thunder sounded, and before the flashes of the lightning shone, or ever the foundations of paradise were laid, before the fair flowers were seen, or ever the powers of the earthquake were established, before the innumerable hosts of angels were gathered together, or ever the heights of the air were lifted up, before the measures of the firmament were named, or ever the footstool of Sion was established, and ere time began to be, or ever the imaginations of them that now sin were estranged, before they were sealed that treasured faith, then did I consider these things, and they all were made through Me alone. (2 Esd. vi. 1).

“And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and voices and thunders.”

And the four living creatures “full of eyes round about and within rest not day and night saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God the All Ruler, which was and which is, and which is to come.

“And the four and twenty elders say, Worthy art Thou our Lord and our God to receive the glory and the honour and the power; for Thou didst create all things, and because of Thy will they were, and were created.” (Rev. iv.).

## IV. THE GIVER OF LIFE

### I. THE MYSTERY OF LIFE.

Life is a profound mystery. No one knows what it is. All we can do is to observe its presence or its absence, and observe, describe, and measure its activities. We can see it under the pressure of necessity and desire, rising from its most elementary form in the protoplasm through all the kingdoms of fish and flower and reptile and animal to its throne in the heart of man. We can



discern two factors: an activity or stimulus from the environment and a response from the organism. When an organism responds to its environment we say, "It lives." When it fails to respond we say, "It dies."

## 2. TWO STAGES OF EVOLUTION.

At first life moves upward by pressure from below, from fear of death. At a later stage life moves upward by attraction from above, from love of life. The tiger learns its spring, and the fox its cunning, and the antelope its swiftness from fear of death. But the saint consecrates himself to Goodness, and the philosopher to Truth, and the artist to Beauty, not from fear of death, but from love of life. And the Good, the Beautiful, and the True are three blended rays from the face of God.

The evolution of the physical ends with the production of man's body. In the million years since this point was reached no superior form has appeared on the earth. The interest in life's drama passes on to the evolution of man's soul.

Thus we see the Holy Spirit of Discipline taking the primitive instinct of the preservation of life and fear of death, purifying it by suffering, cleansing it of grossness, exalting it by giving it an altruistic reference, so that men will gladly die that others may live, and sublimating it into a divine passion for union with God. This is always the Holy Spirit's method. He takes the cosmic impulse for the preservation of the race, which begins in the unlovely instinct of an animal. He disciplines, purifies, cleanses, and exalts it to the divine passion of Holy Matrimony, so that what began as the lust of an animal is transfigured into "the passion of a god."

## 3. THE DAWN OF MIND.

Scientific experiment has proved that the most primitive living cell, when crushed by artificial restraints out of its proper form, will resume its normal shape

as soon as it is free. Apparently it has an interior impulse to fulfil its destiny, which external force may hinder but cannot frustrate. This impulse later on develops into purposive striving after betterment. So biologists have traced the dawn and growth of mind in animals, as it begins with curiosity and the spirit of adventure and the endeavour after well-being. In some animals there is perceptual inference; but man alone seems to arrive at "conceptual" inference or reason. "He thinks the Ought, definitely guiding his conduct in the light of ideals which in turn are wrapped up with the fact that he is a social person" (Prof. J. A. Thomson).

No one can understand why the process of development is through so much suffering. But we can understand to some extent why the Holy Spirit disciplines and educates men into freedom by the twofold method of inspiration and environment. For it is exactly the way in which we educate our children if we are wise. We make suggestions to them which unveil a lofty ideal, and we surround them with an environment which will allow of the development of their inner resources, and strengthen them to overcome difficulties. Stimulation, guided experiment, trial and error, strain and responsibility are essential to education for freedom. For freedom cannot be bought or bestowed. It must be won.

#### 4. THE CREATION OF MAN.

Man is a sacrament, a being of two worlds, made of the dust of the earth and the breath of God: inheriting from the brute creation all the instincts, emotions, passions, lusts, and impulses of an animal; made in the image of God in his power to think and to will and to love. He is an animal: but an animal with an ideal. He has seen the Heavenly Vision of the Good, the Beautiful, and the True.

Man is always a response. He answers or fails to answer to various stimuli which act on him from his

environment. His lungs do not create the air; they respond to it. His eye does not create the light; it responds to it. His mind does not create the Truth; it responds to it. His heart does not create his God; it responds to Him. For in his environment there are not only material things and spiritual, but also many persons, and, above all, God.

## 5. SUBJECTIVE SELECTION.

You were born into an atmosphere of which the supreme fact is the all-embracing love of God and the activities of the Holy Spirit. How have you responded to the Holy Spirit's inspirations? For you are free to choose to what you will attend. Man is a response to the stimuli of his environment, but this response is not merely automatic or mechanical. From an infinite number of such stimuli he can select those to which he will attend. In this subjective selection lies his freedom.

When a coach full of tourists is driving through the Trossachs, the environment is the same for all, but each selects what most interests him. One, a geologist, is absorbed in noting the strata of the rocks; another in the species of flowers; an artist in the beauty of the scenery; a mystic in the whole as the veil of God's Presence. But the environment includes also the other tourists and their conversation which may penetrate, distract, dull, and deaden our souls, or attract, uplift, quicken, and inspire us. Besides these the environment includes the Presence of the Holy Spirit, who is within and around and above each process and each person, stimulating their instincts, speaking to their hearts, inspiring their minds.

## CONVERSE WITH THE UNIVERSE.

1. *The Son.* O thou earth, wherefore hast thou brought forth if the mind is made out of the dust like as all other created things? For it were better that the dust itself had been unborn, so that the mind might

not have been made therefrom. But now the mind groweth with us, and by reason of this we are tormented, because we perish and know it. Let the race of men lament and the beasts of the field be glad. . . . For it is far better with them than with us; for they look not for judgment, neither do they know of torment or of salvation promised unto them after death (2 Esd. vii. 62).

*Mother Earth.* Who art thou, my son, thus to judge beyond thine understanding? The beasts are happy because they are true to the law of their being and fulfil their destiny. If thou art true to thy calling, thou, too, wilt be at peace and have naught to fear. Only the man who violates the law of his spiritual nature and lives like a beast need fear the judgment. Thy calling is to be the high priest of all creation. For this I gave thee birth. Mistake not this nature which thy mind perceives for the whole universe. The Universe includes thy perceiving mind. I have groaned and travailed in pain through countless ages in order that in thee all creation might burst forth into song. And now I groan as thou takest my fruits and usest them to dethrone thy reason, and dyest me crimson with the blood of thy wars. I hear only a murmuring where I looked for songs of praise. We endured, eagerly expecting the manifestation of the sons of God, a high priest of creation who would make articulate in prayer our dumb longings and unconscious strivings and offer up in songs of praise our joy. At thy birth the stars of the morning sang together. We cradled thee in Beauty: we nourished thee on Truth: we hoped to see on thy countenance Goodness, the pure reflection of the face of God. Do not show us only gloom as the fruit of all our travail.

2. *The Son to the Father.* But, Father, the mystery of the pain of Thy people torments me. May I not ask Thee for some light?

*The Father.* My son, thou art sore troubled in mind for Israel's sake: lovest thou that people better than

He that made them? The creature may not haste above the Creator (2 Esd. v. 33, 44). I cannot show thee what thou canst not see or wilt not hear. I have given thee the Holy Spirit to discipline and guide thee into all truth; but thou must respond to His inspiration, and obey His voice in thine heart. He will teach thee to love, and to love is to live, and there is no other life.

## THE EVOLUTION OF LOVE

### THE VOICE OF SORROW.

Sorrow am I:

And mine is the voice of the ocean

Mourning the thousand dead,

. . . . .

The voice of the moaning pine trees,

The voice of the wind and rain,

The voice of the crags and caverns,

The voice of an endless pain,

A pain that has racked the millions

Since time and the world began;

And like a refining fire

Is moulding the heart of man.

I stand where the souls of the millions

Must pass thro' the Melting Pot;

And mine is the voice of their wailing,

For the irons of God are hot.

Mine is the voice of the Grinding

That comes from the Mills of God,

Where in a relentless wine-press,

The souls of mankind are trod.

I see and behold in vision

When Time and the World are done,

When the Trial of man is ended,

And the Circle of Life is spun.

I see a triumphant army  
 Stretch out of the womb of night,  
 From the mists of the first beginning  
 To the Throne of Eternal Light.

I see that they bear a Jewel  
 In splendour exceeding far  
 The glow of the western heavens,  
 Where glistens a single star.

And I know that that Gem is the glory,  
 The crown of all human pain,  
 The fruit of an age-long travail,  
 The purpose at last made plain

Why man has been made to suffer  
 Since ever the world was born,  
 Why the soul of man has been stricken,  
 Why the heart of man has been torn.

For that Gem is the Great Perfection,  
 Whose price was so bitter dear;  
 And the form of that priceless Jewel  
 Is the form of a human tear.

GURNEY.

#### LESSON OF SORROW.

“I believe, then, that bereavement is the greatest of all initiations. In performing this office it partly explains itself. Without it I think we should never penetrate much below the surface of life. As has been said: The life that has not known and accepted sorrow is strangely crude and untaught. It can neither help nor teach, for it has never learned. The life that has spurned the lesson of sorrow, or failed to read it aright, is cold and hard; but the life that has been disciplined by sorrow is courageous, and full of holy and gentle love. Without sorrow life glares. It has no half-tones nor merciful shadows. Sorrow is a gentle teacher, and reveals many things that would otherwise be hard to understand.”—*Quoted by Dr. Inge in “Personal Religion and the Life of Devotion.”*



## V. HE SPAKE BY THE PROPHETS

## 1. LOVE AND FREEDOM.

Man was made in God's image in his power to think, to will, and to love. He was destined to grow into God's likeness, freely to think God's thoughts, freely to choose His will, freely to love what He loves and as He loves. To make an automatic machine all that we have to do is to arrange inanimate objects in such a way that, by their nature, they will act and react on one another to fulfil our will. So, too, in dealing with animals, by studying their nature we can, within certain limits, guide the course of their evolution to fulfil our will. We decide whether we want cart-horses or mules or race-horses, turnspits or greyhounds; and by stimulating their instincts, regulating their opportunities, and changing their environment, we get what we want. We decide which kinds of animals shall survive and which shall perish. Again, by cutting down trees and regulating the waterways we can, to some extent, alter the climate of a country and change its character. In such ways we can fulfil our destiny to "replenish the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, the fowls of the air, and over every living thing" (Gen. i. 28). Thus we can impress our will on other creatures, even on human beings weaker than ourselves, and force them to serve our purpose.

But one thing we cannot do. We cannot force anyone to love us. We may win the love of animals and slaves, but we cannot force it. For the essence of Love is that it is free. It has been the Holy Spirit's work in Creation to evolve a being capable of making a free response to God. And "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Cor. iii. 17).

## 2. THE EVOLUTION OF THE SOUL.

We may note the way in which the Holy Spirit has evoked, disciplined, controlled, purified, and sublimated

those powers that He has implanted in created things. We see existence passing from the unconscious to the conscious, from the conscious to the self-conscious, and from the self-conscious to the God-conscious. Again, we may trace it from the determinate to the indeterminate, from the indeterminate to the self-determinate, and so to the God-determinate. Everywhere spirit is penetrating, subduing, and subordinating matter. Everywhere, from the tyranny of necessity, the soul is winning its freedom.

Man begins with a bundle of instincts which have to be co-ordinated and unified into a consecrated will. At first the dominant instinct is the will to live. This is disciplined by the experience of life into the will to live *with* others—the birth of society. At the age of puberty this will to live *with* others expands into the will to live *for* others—the birth of chivalry. The will to live for others is exalted into the will to die for others—the birth of heroism; and man made in God's image has grown into His likeness. For the will to live has become the will to love: and "greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." It has been said, "To love is the perfect tense of the verb 'to live.'"

### 3. THE SPIRIT OF ORDER AND BEAUTY.

*Gen. i. 1-3*: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was waste and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep: and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" ("was brooding upon creatures"). "And God said: Let there be light; and there was light."

*Consider.—(i.) Order from Chaos.*

Our world began as a whirl of incandescent gas detached from the sun. This whirling mass contained some eighty chemical elements which may possibly be variations of one substance. The way in which these

chemical elements would develop was already fixed by their nature—that is to say, by those powers or qualities that God had implanted in them. From the beginning the Spirit of God was brooding over creatures, giving to each its nature—*i.e.*, implanting in each those properties which, in their inevitable development, would express God's will. Whether life, consciousness, mind, are a development of these God-implanted primal properties, or a later gift added to inanimate creation, is not yet known. Tyndall, in his Belfast address, writes: "Take your dead hydrogen atoms, your dead carbon atoms, your dead phosphorus atoms, and all the other atoms, dead as grains of shot, of which the brain is formed. Imagine them separate and sensationless. Observe them running together and forming all imaginable combinations. This, as a purely mechanical process, is seeable by the mind. But can you see, or dream, or in any way imagine how, out of that mechanical act, and from these individually dead atoms, sensation, thought, and emotion are to arise? What baffles and bewilders me is the notion that from those physical tremors, things so utterly incongruous with them as sensation, thought, and emotion can be derived. You may say or think that this issue of consciousness from the clash of atoms is not more incongruous than the flash of light from the union of oxygen and hydrogen (L. Buchner). But I beg to say that it is. The flash is an affair of consciousness, the objective counterpart of which is a vibration. It is a flash only by your interpretation. *You* are the cause of the apparent incongruity; and *you* are the thing that puzzles me."

(ii.) *Fixed or Free.*

We are familiar with the apparent ruthless cruelty of nature, with the stern, inexorable, iron, mechanical grinding of the great machine. We see men by the thousands swallowed up in an earthquake, a boy on

his voyage fallen overboard unnoticed and left, an heroic but ineffectual struggle for life, amidst the silence of sea and sky, while the chill waves lick his lips, and the cold stars look down on him with passionless indifference. Nearly every day we read of some tragedy, as a precious human life is maimed or crushed or killed by the blind forces of nature. We have to watch helplessly while some infinitely minute microbes torture and kill the tender body of one whom we love more than life itself.

This is not the place for dealing fully with the Mystery of Pain. But we can see one element in the illumination of that mystery. We can see that a fixed and constant order of nature is far more merciful than a free or fluctuating one. If there were no fixed order on which we could rely, if the earth were solid one day and liquid the next for no reason, if there were no law of gravitation, so that the chairs on which you meant to sit down moved away without your knowledge, or rooms turned upside down without warning, so that the floor became the ceiling, we see at once that the suffering would be far greater in a chaotic universe than in one in which inanimate creatures have a nature which ensures that they will act, combine, and energise in a certain way which we are able, by diligent study and frequent experiment, in some measure to know. Without this fixed order, rational and human life would be impossible. Some day in the future the sun will not shine on the earth with sufficient heat to make human life any longer possible. But till then it is an immense gain to be able to rely with reasonable certainty on the rising of the sun and the fulfilment of its regular functions. Some 75 per cent. of human suffering is due to human sin, and selfishness and ignorance and other preventable causes. God expects us to remove this preventable suffering by co-operating with His fixed order, which we can find out by the use of our reason.

Science unveils to us the ways in which God's will works normally, and we call them the laws of nature.

We are able, then, to worship the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Order, who has brought order out of chaos, and to feel that a Universe which can be interpreted by our minds and reasons must have issued forth from an eternal Mind. If we come across a monkey's scratchings on a rock, we do not attempt to learn their meaning, because we believe that as no reason dictated them, so no reason will be found in them. But when men find other marks on a rock, called hieroglyphics, they will spend half a lifetime in unravelling their meaning, because they believe that intelligence can interpret what intelligence inspired.

(iii.) *The Spirit of Beauty.*

But this Order of Nature might have been an ugly and monotonous order. By a slight change in the original substance, God, if He had been a different God, might have evolved a black-and-white world like a chessboard, with a single note for sound, which would have produced square and angular, idiotic men and women, as hideous as in a cubist picture, a world with a single monotonous movement like a piston. Man is able to produce such an atrocious world because he is sinful. Selfishness and greed for gain have condemned millions of our fellow-countrymen to live in foul and filthy slums, in semi-darkness from our polluted atmosphere, in rows of houses of soul-destroying monotony, amidst hideous architecture which proclaims the degradation of the rich man's soul, surroundings which kill out of men's souls the sense of beauty and breed every vice and crime. But God, being what He is, could not produce such a world. He expresses Himself in the world and in the souls of men; in the response of man's soul to the external world Beauty is realised or made real.

(iv.) *What is Beauty ?*

No one knows what its ultimate nature is. We know when our soul is aware of perfect satisfaction and when

we say "How beautiful!" When we try to analyse this awareness, we are able to detect some of the following characteristics. Beauty resides in order. Order includes the metaphysical elements of unity and multiplicity, harmony, symmetry and proportion, colour and form. Beauty does not reside absolutely in either subject or object. It is realised in the interaction of subject and object, in that relationship of an æsthetic perception in the soul to an order or harmony in some external object. Beauty of conduct, manners, and movement in human intercourse is realised when one perceives in the conduct of another an expression of self-respect and respect for others, a word, or gesture, or deed which is exactly suitable to the occasion, a sensitiveness of soul which enables a person to feel what another is feeling, and to resolve discord into harmony, so that we say "How beautiful!"

So we worship the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Beauty, and offer up our thanksgivings for all the beauty with which He surrounds us, both in nature and in grace, in flower and star, in snow-capped mountains and peaceful fields, in sunrise and sunset, in cloud and dewdrop, in the grace of movement, in dance and song, in happy human intercourse, and in the Mysteries of the Mass.

When Madame Melba was to sing in Dublin, she arrived at the Town Hall in pouring rain, and found that no carpet had been laid down for her to tread on between the carriage and the entrance. She was lamenting to her maid that on the wet pavement her shoes would be drenched, and she would catch cold and be unable to sing in her next engagement, when a little Irish newspaper boy overheard the lamentations, and quickly sacrificed his whole bundle of papers, spreading them out to make a royal carpet for Madame Melba's ascent. She quickly left her carriage, reached the entrance dryshod, and turned round to thank the boy, but found that he had disappeared in the throng. She made inquiries through the police, obtained the boy's name and



address, and sent him a letter expressing her thanks, enclosing a five-pound note. The boy wrote gratefully to acknowledge her letter, explained that he was supporting a bedridden mother who could never leave her room, and had used the five pounds to buy a gramophone, so that his mother might listen to the phonographic record of Madame Melba's rendering of "Home, Sweet Home." Browning says of music that when we add one note to two the result is not three notes, but a star. We feel that the boy had produced a star worthy to mingle with the stars of Madame Melba's singing.

(v.) *Ugliness and Sin.*

There are some forms of ugliness for which we are not responsible. I have seen some burnt and blasted and scarred ravines in the deserts of Asia and Africa and America which seem to defy the possibility of beauty. But even there the Spirit of God in sunrise and sunset sometimes makes beauty to dawn on their stern and rugged faces. So also sometimes the features of a human face seem to defy the possibility of beauty. And yet one may see even the repulsive face of an evil man, deep scarred with the signatures of lust and passion, soften into a wistful beauty when touched by love. It is certain that many a face whose features lack all beauty of form can be transfigured by the glow of the inward spirit until they become radiant and beautiful. Love can make all things lovely if only we will allow it.

We must ask ourselves, are we helping to beautify the world, entering into the graceful rhythm of the Universe, creating harmonies, resolving discords, trying to make ourselves and our surroundings in tune with the infinite? Does the organisation of our social life seek to develop what is beautiful? Is not the very sense of the beautiful killed out of the soul of our people by the sordid surroundings in which millions are compelled to live? Does each man go to his work in the



hope of creating something beautiful, or has mass production and machinery killed the creative, artistic spirit out of industry? Is industry regarded as a vocation, and work as a form of worship? "The Lord hath called by name Bezalel . . . and He hath filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge and in all manner of workmanship, to devise cunning work in gold and in silver, and in brass, and in cutting of stones for setting and in carving of wood to work in all manner of cunning workmanship" (Exod. xxxv. 30). It has been well said that "art is the well-doing of what needs doing, that every work of art shows that it was made by a human being for a human being," and that "art is thoughtful workmanship." Mr. Ford says, "My aim is to save my men from the necessity of thinking." We need a crusade against preventable ugliness, so that our cities and our streets may by their beauty bear witness to God and awaken the spirit of worship. Grace and beauty should hallow even our clothing. "Thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, for glory and for beauty." Then it would be unnecessary for a Bishop to protest against the slovenly and dowdy attire of many Church-workers who tended to become "scarecrows upon the fields of virtue."

Beauty is the Spirit of Worship. "O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness" (Ps. xxix. 2).

"One thing have I desired of the Lord, which I will require: even that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life to behold the fair beauty of the Lord and to visit His temple" (Ps. xxvii. 4).

"Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined forth" (Ps. l. 2).

"Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us" (Ps. xc. 17, R.V.).

Honour and majesty are before Him:

Strength and beauty are in His sanctuary

(Ps. xcvi. 6, R.V.)

It is our final end: "Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty" (Isa. xxxiii. 17).

Beauty exalts good men to the contemplation of God, the author of all beauty: to whom the foolish are blind.

For verily all men by nature were but vain who had no perception of God,

And from the good things that are seen they gained not power to know Him that is;

Neither by giving heed to the works did they recognise the artificer:

But either fire or wind or swift air,

Or circling stars, or luminaries of heaven,

They thought to be gods that rule the world.

And if it was through delight in their beauty that they took them to be gods,

Let them know how much better than these is their Sovereign Lord:

For the first author of beauty created them.

But if it was through astonishment at their power and influence,

Let them understand from them how much more powerful is He that formed them;

For from the greatness of the beauty even of created things,

In like proportion does man form the image of their first maker.

(Wisd. xiii. 1-5.)

And finally Beauty shall crown the head of the righteous.

But the righteous live for ever

And in the Lord is their reward,

And the care of them with the Most High.

Therefore shall they receive the crown of royal dignity

And the diadem of beauty from the Lord's hand;

Because with His right hand shall He cover them

And with His arm shall He shield them.

(Wisd. v. 15, 16.)

Beauty is not a means to an end, a way of winning pleasure. Beauty, Truth and Goodness are those ultimate values which are of the very being of God. They must be valued for their own sake or they change their character.

Arthur Clutton Brock writes thus in *The Ultimate Belief* (Constable and Co.):

"The philosophy of the Spirit tells us that the Spirit desires three things, and desires these for their own sake and not for any further aim beyond them. It desires to do what is right for the sake of doing what is right; to know the truth for the sake of knowing the truth; and it has a third desire which is not so easily stated, but which I will now call the desire for beauty. . . . If they are pursued for some ulterior end they change their nature. If, for instance, I aim at goodness, so that I may make a profit by it, it is no longer goodness that I aim at but profit. So also with beauty" (p. 20).

"Unless we exercise our æsthetic activity the universe is not glorious to us. Science is the discovery of arid facts, and duty obedience to set rules. When Christ told His disciples to consider the lilies of the field, He assumed that they had exercised their æsthetic activity upon them. If they had not done so, His statement that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these would have been meaningless. Solomon's array must have been finer than theirs, because more costly, to anyone who did not see the greater beauty of the lilies, and who was not aware that this beauty was to be valued absolutely and not because of its significance in the terms of something else. Love beauty for its own sake, and you will love it better than luxury, which you only value because it gives you comfort and heightens your importance. And this saying of Christ is an assertion of the absolute value of beauty and the merely relative value of luxury" (p. 82).

"We should know that work without beauty means unsatisfied spiritual desire in the worker; that it is

a waste of life and a common evil and danger, like thought without truth, or action without righteousness" (p. 102).

"All men are equal in that they have an equal right to spiritual activities; and the proper aim of society is to secure this equality, not merely to secure property to those who have it" (p. 103).

Dean Inge summarises the teaching of Plotinus thus:

"Plotinus believed that beautiful forms in this world have a real resemblance to their prototypes in the spiritual world. Earth is a good copy of heaven; earthly beauty, we must remember, is the creation of Soul, not a property of matter. But the beauty which we find in objects is not put into them by the individual observer. All beauty is the work of Soul, but not of the individual Soul which admires it. The individual Soul can only appreciate what is akin to itself; but it is not the perceiving mind of the individual which gives to inert matter a meaning by impressing 'form' upon it. That would be to make the individual Soul the creator of the world, which Plotinus says we must not do. And yet the individual Soul is never wholly separated from the universal Soul; and we must remember that no perception, not even the perception of external objects, is mere apprehension. Something is always done or made in the act of perception. The Soul in contemplating Beauty is identifying itself with the formative activity of its own higher principle" (*The Philosophy of Plotinus*, vol. i., p. 214).

#### 4. THE DESIRE FOR GOD.

From the first man has shown a desire for communion with God. Beginning with curiosity and wonder, it grew into a consuming passion. "Oh that I knew where I might find Him. That I might come even to His seat!" (Job xxiii. 3). "My soul thirsteth for Thee; my flesh also longeth after Thee: in a barren and dry land where no water is" (Ps. lxiii. 1).

"Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks: so longeth my soul after Thee, O God.

"My soul is athirst for God, yea, even for the living God: when shall I come to appear before the presence of God?" (Ps. xlii. 12).

"O God, Thou hast created us for Thyself, and our heart can find no rest until it rests in Thee" (St. Augustine).

Now, in ourselves we note not only an instinct of curiosity which impels us to seek the Truth, but also an instinct to communicate to others such truths as we find. It is the social instinct. Love cannot be content merely to enjoy its satisfaction by itself. Love is self-bestowal. Its essence is to give. And as we, conscious of our personality, cannot conceive of a Creator who is less than personal, for there must be in the cause at least as much as there is in the effect, so we believe that God is personal. Though personality in Him may mean much more than personality in us, yet it cannot mean less. So it is irrational to think that the Creator would not will to reveal Himself to us. The only question is—How does He reveal Himself to His creatures?

## 5. GOD'S WAY OF REVELATION.

May we not find the answer by asking: How do I unveil or reveal myself to another creature? We note that we can to some extent reveal ourselves to animals who live with us. By patient consideration of their instincts, by rewards and punishment, by chastisement and praise, we can gradually train them to understand something of our mind, to co-operate with our purpose, and to an elementary code of morals which restrains their impulses and modifies their habits. Thus many dogs develop a sensitive conscience, and when they have done wrong confess it by their tails. We penetrate some way into their nature by word and deed, and the more they respond to our efforts to reveal ourselves to them the more they are capable of receiving, until what

began with the fear of punishment and the hope of reward may rise to a desire to please, to great heights of altruistic love—a real friendship in which the dog and his master will each risk his life to save the other—and there is no greater love than this.

Thus in the Old Testament we have the record of how the Holy Spirit has educated those instincts which He has given us, and disciplined and unified them into a holy will, by the gradual unveiling or revealing of the character of God and of His holy will. We begin with the instinct to live according to our nature and to fulfil our destiny. We sin when we deliberately violate our nature, which nature is the will of God for us. Our nature is to love, trust, and obey God. When, not content with this dependent and responsive state, man set up his will as a separate centre of originality apart from God, then the soul lost its atoning, unifying principle which is the Holy Spirit, and began to disintegrate. Without an Idea, a Heavenly Vision, there is nothing to integrate or harmonise our personality; and man becomes a mass of incoherent conflicting instincts, emotions, desires, and passions with no divine purpose to blend them into a unity and discipline them into due subordination. Man's soul was meant to reach out after God and to respond to Him. When it turns in upon itself in self-love, self-assertion, and self-indulgence, disintegration sets in. This is the Fall: and that bias to selfishness is what we call "original sin."

In physical nature itself there is nothing whatever to account for the anabolic upward-tending process which has woven latent energy into the infinite numbers of forms of kinetic energy we see around us, except the action of God. Again, in physical nature itself there is nothing whatever to hinder the katabolic process, like the running down of a clock, by which some kinetic energy becomes latent at every change of form.

So in our spiritual nature there is nothing whatever to account for the anabolic process by which man has

risen from the cave to the throne of the Universe, except the bestowal and stimulation and guidance by the Holy Spirit of those instincts which He has implanted. And when we have fallen by refusing His guidance, there is nothing whatever to hinder the katabolic process of sin, by which selfishness disintegrates the soul, and will lead man back to primitive savagery, unless God comes to save us. Fallen man has no power to redeem himself. Sin has blinded his mind, weakened his will, and deadened his heart. He needs a new birth of light, strength, and love.

### AN ODE TO NIGHT

Mysterious Night ! When our first parent knew  
Thee from report divine, and heard thy name,  
Did he not tremble for this lovely frame,  
This glorious canopy of light and blue ?

Yet 'neath a curtain of translucent dew,  
Bathed in the rays of the great setting flame,  
Hesperus with the host of heaven came,  
And lo ! Creation widened in man's view.

Who could have thought such darkness lay concealed  
Within thy beams, O Sun ! or who could find,  
Whilst flow'r and leaf and insect stood revealed,  
That to such countless orbs thou mad'st us blind !  
Why do we then shun Death with anxious strife ?  
If Light can thus deceive, wherefore not Life ?

BLANCO WHITE.

## VI. THE PREPARATION FOR REDEMPTION

### I. ELECTION.

God is "not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance," "that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Pet. iii. 9 and 1 Tim. ii. 4).

But man may resist God's purpose: and sin destroys our capacity for God, which is love. Man cannot make



again what he has destroyed: so redemption must come from above. But it must work from within if a free response to the love of God is to be elicited. So God chooses souls who are especially sensitive to Him. He educates them to reveal Him to the world.

If a man wants to capture a drove of wild horses, he does not chase them all at once by himself. He selects, marks down the most swift, strong, high-spirited, sensitive, and intelligent horse; he stalks it patiently for days, flings his lasso over its neck, loops it round its feet, throws the horse to the ground again and again until the horse has a deep-seated conviction and experience of the absolute supremacy of man: Then on this background of fear of a superior strength the master trains the horse by rewards and punishments to understand his will and to co-operate with his purpose; he wins his affection; and then mounted on his chosen horse he rides forth to capture the rest of the drove.

So God chose in Abraham a man especially sensitive to spiritual things. He spoke to his heart and mind. chose him as His friend, revealed to him His will that his family, tribe, and nation should bring the knowledge of God to the world. Thus the destiny of the Israelites was to become the school of sacred knowledge for the human race.

Now, God has no favourites. He gives to each soul all the love he is capable of receiving, and calls each to the function for which he is best fitted. There are two principles which always mark God's election. First He chooses men to co-operate with Him in the redemption of the world, *not for their own sake*, but for *the sake of others*. Secondly He chooses men *to opportunity*, not to *final destiny*. The Jews misunderstood this election as an election to guaranteed salvation, as many uninstructed Christians still do: and this perversion only hardens persons in spiritual pride, with its inevitable blindness and loss of vocation. It unfits them for God's service.

## 2. INSPIRATION AND REVELATION.

“The action of God on the nature of man we may call inspiration; its result, the perfected and purified consciousness of self, the world, and God, is revelation” (Dr. Garvie).

The Old Testament is the record of the way in which the Holy Spirit acted on the chosen people to educate them into the knowledge of God. Living amidst tribes and nations who worshipped idols and false gods and who had divorced religion from morality, we note how the Hebrews were taught the unity and supremacy of God. The Spirit of God was to them the vital power which belonged to the Divine Being, the Divine Energy which is the origin of all created life, and especially of human existence and the instincts of human nature—gifts of strength and of courage as in Samson (Judg. xiii. 25, xiv. 6); Saul (1 Sam. xi. 6): gifts of wisdom (Gen. xli. 38): skill in workmanship, in arts and crafts, Bezalel and Aholiab (Exod. xxxi. 3, 6); Moses and the seventy elders (Num. xi. 17); Balaam (Num. xxiv. 2); David (2 Sam. xxiii. 2).

But not only did they attribute exceptional bodily strength and physical courage, as well as mental and spiritual capacity to “the Spirit of the Lord,” they recognised that a power from on high was revealing to them His righteous will. This power, though it worked within them, could not have been born of their own desires, for it was most manifest in rebuking them for sin, in reproaching them for backsliding, and in hindering them from following their lusts and desires. While it worked from within it was born from above. Water cannot rise above its own source: the conscience cannot be born of the heart whose lusts and desires it hinders and whose sin it rebukes. So in the Prophets the Hebrews recognised the working of a Spirit which came from above while it worked from within. “But I truly am full of power by the spirit of the Lord, and

of judgment and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin " (Mic. iii. 8).

### 3. THE PROPHETS.

"The Prophet is a man of the Spirit; the Spirit of God falls upon him, fills his mind, and speaks by his mouth; he finds himself at times dominated by a spiritual force which comes from without and above. Yet the Prophets of the Old Testament lay no exclusive claim to the possession of the Spirit. The nation of Israel as a whole has been under the Spirit's guidance from the time of the Exodus " (Swete: Introduction to *The Holy Spirit in the New Testament*).

"In all their affliction He was afflicted and the angel of His presence saved them: in His love and in His pity He redeemed them, and He bare them and carried them all the days of old. But they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit . . ." (Is. lxiii. 9).

But not only did the Prophet remind his nation of God's mercies in the past, and rebuke them for their sin in the present, he promised a great revival in the future from the outpouring of the Spirit—"showers of blessings," "a new heart" of uprightness, cleansing, and a universal mission (Jer. xxxi. 31; Ezek. xxxvi. 26, xxxvii. 9, xxxix. 29).

"And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out My spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out My spirit " (Joel ii. 28). This great outpouring of the Spirit would reach its culminating point in the Messianic King on whom the Spirit would rest permanently, who would be anointed by the Spirit to preach a gospel of liberation, healing, strength, and joy (Isa. xi. 1 and xlii. 1).

The true Prophet was distinguished from the false, because while the latter were mere soothsayers and

predictors, the former were men of vision who could grasp the moral meaning of events. The Prophets succeeded in blending holiness and righteousness, in teaching the transcendence of God and His demand for right conduct in man, so that "the Peace of Righteousness" and "the Glory of Godliness" became in Baruch v. 4 the very name of His people.

While in the canonical books the Unity and the Holiness and Righteousness of God were fully revealed, in the Apocrypha, under the influence of Greek thought, the cosmic energies of the Holy Spirit were most fully realised.

He is in all the world which He is always creating. "The Spirit of the Lord hath filled the world; and that which holdeth all things together hath knowledge of the Voice" (Wisd. i. 7). "For thou spakest and they were made: Thou didst send forth Thy spirit, and it builded them" (Judith xvi. 14).

He convicts of sin. "Thine incorruptible spirit is in all things; wherefore thou convictest by little and little them that fall from the right way" (Wisd. xii. 1).

He gives wisdom. "And who ever gained knowledge of Thy counsel, except Thou gavest wisdom, and sentest Thy Holy Spirit from on high? And it was thus that the ways of them which are on earth were corrected, and men were taught the things that are pleasing unto Thee; and through wisdom were they saved" (Wisd. ix. 17). But the loftiest utterance in which man has ever described the Energy of God, which we may now recognise as describing the person and work of the Holy Spirit, a poem fit to be ranked with St. Paul's and St. John's great Psalms of Love (1 Cor. xiii.; 1 John iv. 7) is in Wisd. vii. 22—viii 1.

For there is in her a spirit quick of understanding, holy,  
Alone in kind, manifold,  
Subtil, freely moving.  
Clear in utterance, unpolluted,

Distinct, unharmed,  
 Loving what is good, keen, unhindered,  
 Beneficent, loving toward man,  
 Stedfast, sure, free from care,  
 All powerful, all surveying,  
 And penetrating through all spirits  
 That are quick of understanding, pure, most subtil;  
 For wisdom is more mobile than any motion;  
 Yea, she pervadeth and penetrateth all things by reason  
 of her pureness.

For she is a breath of the power of God,  
 And a clear effluence of the glory of the Almighty;  
 Therefore can nothing defiled find entrance into her.  
 For she is an effulgence from everlasting light  
 And an unspotted mirror of the working of God,  
 And an image of His goodness.  
 And she, being one, hath power to do all things;  
 And remaining in herself reneweth all things:  
 And from generation to generation passing into holy souls  
 She maketh men friends of God and prophets.  
 For nothing doth God love save him that dwelleth with  
 wisdom,  
 For she is fairer than the sun,  
 And above all constellations of the stars;  
 Being compared with the light she is found to be before it;  
 For to the light of day succeedeth night,  
 But against wisdom evil doth not prevail;  
 But she reacheth from one end of the world to the other  
 with full strength,  
 And ordereth all things graciously.

Such, then, is the Spirit that filleth the world and has  
 wrought up all creation to be a fit temple for the living  
 God: and brought forth man to be the priest of nature.  
 We can but cry with the writer:

O God of the Fathers, and Lord who keepest Thy  
 mercy,  
 Who madest all things by Thy word:

## 36 THE SPIRIT OF WISDOM

And by Thy wisdom formedst man,  
That he should have dominion over the creatures that  
were made by Thee,  
And rule the world in holiness and righteousness,  
And execute judgment in uprightness of soul;  
Give me Wisdom, her that sitteth by Thee on Thy  
Throne (Wisd. ix. 1).

### THE GLORY OF WISDOM

Wisdom shall praise her own soul  
And shall glory in the midst of her people.  
In the congregation of the Most High shall she open her  
mouth,  
And glory in the presence of His power.  
I came forth from the mouth of the Most High  
And covered the earth as a mist.  
I dwelt in high places,  
And My throne is on the pillar of the cloud.  
Alone I compassed the circuit of heaven,  
And walked in the depth of the abyss.  
In the waves of the sea and in all the earth,  
And in every people and nation I got a possession  
(Ecclus. xxiv. 1).

### THE PROVERBS (viii. 22-end)

Wisdom saith:

The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His way,  
Before His works of old.  
I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning,  
Or ever the earth was.  
When there were no depths, I was brought forth;  
When there were no fountains abounding with water,  
Before the mountains were settled,  
Before the hills was I brought forth:  
While as yet He had not made the earth, nor the fields,  
Nor the beginning of the dust of the world.  
When He established the heavens, I was there:

When He set a circle upon the face of the deep :  
 When He made firm the skies above :  
 When the fountains of the deep became strong :  
 When He gave to the sea its bound :  
 That the waters should not transgress His command-  
 ment :  
 When He marked out the foundations of the earth :  
 Then I was by Him, as a master workman :  
 And I was daily His delight,  
 Rejoicing always before Him ;  
 Rejoicing in His habitable earth ;  
 And My delight was with the sons of men.  
 Now therefore My sons, hearken unto Me :  
 For blessed are they that keep My ways.  
 Hear instruction, and be wise,  
 And refuse it not.  
 Blessed is the man that heareth Me,  
 Watching daily at My gates,  
 Waiting at the posts of My doors,  
 For whoso findeth Me findeth life,  
 And shall obtain favour of the Lord,  
 But he that sinneth against Me wrongeth his own  
 soul :  
 All they that hate Me love death.

## NOTES ON THE PROPHETS

### I. THEIR MONOTHEISM.

“ The content of the experience of the Mono-Yahwists cannot be explained solely as the result of an ‘ uprush ’ from the subconscious. While this explanation may be applicable elsewhere, it does not hold good here. . . . There was nothing in their past lives, before they entered into their peculiar experiences (of inspiration from God) to suggest to them the truth of Mono-Yahwism. The inherited assumptions, the logic, and the entire intellectual atmosphere of their day suggested to them, from child-



hood onwards, the truth of polytheism and the hollow unreality of ethical monotheism. Their belief then was not an 'uprush' from the hidden storehouse of memory or of unconscious cerebration; if we must speak in these terms it would be more true to call it by Professor Percy Gardner's term, a 'downrush' from the 'super-conscious.' "

## 2. THEIR COMMUNION WITH GOD.

"And yet there must have been some sufficient cause for these experiences. Perhaps one might make use of these phenomena in an argument in support of belief in the existence of God; but, if we start from the premiss that God does exist and that it is possible for men to have communion with Him, then surely we must see instances of such communion in these experiences. They bear about them every mark of a personal communion with God. How profoundly one human personality may be influenced by another, when brought into close contact with it, is a matter of common observation. The strong impress themselves upon the weak in many subtle ways, of which both are more or less conscious. One cannot think that it is otherwise with the Almighty and All-Holy Personality of God. Granted that personal intercourse with Him is possible, surely, where an impression of inconceivable power and purity is so burned in upon the soul that it never ceases to believe in the almighty power and moral purity of God, one must see evidence of genuine communion between God and man. As has been seen, the experiences of the Hebrew Prophets were just of this type; they felt themselves to be in the presence of an Almighty and All-Holy Person with such an intense sense of reality that it changed for them the whole meaning of existence" (Hamilton: *The People of God*, p. 171, Oxford University Press, 1912).

## SOME THOUGHTS ON INSPIRATION

BY DR. ARMITAGE ROBINSON.

“Inspiration” denotes the process by which the Spirit of God reveals to the spirits of men the nature and the will of God. It is primarily used of persons, and only in a secondary sense of the words spoken or written by inspired persons.

It has always been the Divine method to select certain men, to enter into peculiar intimacy with them, to reach their spirits by the direct operation of the Divine Spirit, to purify their hearts, to quicken their perceptive faculties, and to intrust them with a special knowledge of the Divine will and purpose in order that they may be the teachers of their fellowmen. This is the primary meaning of Inspiration; men are inspired by the contact of the Divine Spirit with their spirits, not for their own sakes merely, or even chiefly, but that they may interpret the will of God to the men of their time.

The message was not written by the Divine hand, nor dictated by an outward compulsion; it was planted in the hearts of men, and made to grow in a fruitful soil. And then they were required to express it in their own language, after their natural methods, and in accordance with the stage of knowledge which their time had reached. Their human faculties were purified and quickened by the Divine Spirit; but they spoke to their time in the language of their time; they spoke a spiritual message, accommodated to the experience of their age—a message of faith in God and of righteousness as demanded by a righteous God.

The Prophet is brought into living contact with the eternal, and he utters as much of it as is possible to be uttered in terms of time. His human faculties are not suspended, but rather they are quickened into fuller activity; his human knowledge and his human intelligence are employed as the medium through which a spiritual

message is interpreted to his generation. We are justified in supposing that such inspiration would save him from all mistakes which would obscure the meaning of his spiritual message. Whether it would equally preserve him from misconception as to facts of natural knowledge or of past history, we cannot argue beforehand: we can only learn this from the examination of what he actually has said. What we are sure is that the spiritual purpose would be safeguarded, that he would rightly recognise the power of God in the processes of nature, and that he would clearly trace the hand of God in his nation's history.

When the great era of prophetic inspiration was past, and no voice any longer dared to cry "Thus saith the Lord," pious Jews fell back on these old writings, and found in them what they could not find elsewhere. The book took the place of the living voice.

## VII. ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

(St. Matt. iii. 1-4; St. Mark i. 1-8; St. Luke iii. 1-20; St. John i. 6-15.)

### I. HIS BIRTH.

*The great Revival of Religion*, which was to prepare the way for the coming of the King, was born of prayer and intense desire in the hearts of two persons in a priest's home. In their little home in a priest's city in the hill-country of Judæa, Zacharias and Elizabeth lived their blameless and uneventful lives. "And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless" (St. Luke i. 6). They probably belonged to that little group of aged persons who frequented the Temple and kept the flame of Hope alight by their prayers and supplications, Simeon "righteous and devout looking for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him" (St. Luke ii. 25), and Anna, the prophetess, of a great age, "which departed not from the Temple

worshipping with fastings and supplications night and day," and "all them that were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem" (St. Luke ii. 36-38).

*Consider—(i.) The Significance of the Commonplace.*

In the darkest hour of the world's history this little group of unimportant persons kept hope alive by their earnest prayers, and provided that atmosphere of fervent desire and eager expectation which enables God to work for our salvation—not in the palace of the High Priest, nor among the Colleges of Rabbis; not in the palace of the Roman Governor with his legions of soldiers, nor on the exchange where wealthy merchants sold their wares; not in the halls of justice where lawyers and scribes argued; but in a cottage home where obscure persons trusted in God and prayed the great revival began. However insignificant we are, we may take our part in a new revival if we pray with eagerness and faith in the promises and power of God.

*(ii.) The Angel's Message (St. Luke i. 13-20).*

*Consider—The Holy Spirit as the Guide of Life.*

God and not man is the author and originator of all spiritual movements. They are born from above by the Holy Spirit working at the springs of life and making the barren womb fruitful. Not the skill of a diplomatist, or the efforts of a politician, or the matured judgment of a philosopher, but the activity of the Holy Spirit controls history and calls into existence the person needed to prepare the way for the coming of the King, and the establishment of the Kingdom.

*(iii.) The Service of the Sanctuary.*

Every true and lasting revival of religion begins at the altar.

Noah (Gen. viii. 20); Abram (Gen. xii. 7); Isaac (Gen. xxvi. 25); Jacob (Gen. xxxiii. 20, xxxv. 7); Moses (Exod. xvii. 15); Elijah (1 Kings xviii. 30 and 32); Zerubbabel (Ezra iii. 3).

Ceremonial is not opposed to spirituality. It is the golden chalice into which we may or may not pour our devotion. It depends on your spiritual temperature whether you make the fixed forms of worship glow with a passion of desire, or whether the incense ascends unaccompanied by your prayer; whether you are isolated by blind selfishness and dead worldliness, or whether you see and hear "the angels and archangels and all the company of Heaven" with whose praises you profess to join your own. Zacharias was attentive and recollected, concentrating all his energies on his prayer; and he saw and heard.

## 2. THE EDUCATION OF THE PROPHET.

The Holy Spirit trained him from his birth. "He shall be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb" (St. Luke i. 15). His home life was profoundly religious. Of both his father and mother it is recorded that they were "filled with the Holy Ghost" (St. Luke i. 41 and 67). Even before his birth his unconscious life responded in his mother's womb to the hope of the Christ (St. Luke i. 41). His childhood opened in the atmosphere of a pious home, where, no doubt, in the readings of the scriptures he became accustomed to the sense of God's Presence, the splendour of His promises, the divine destiny of his nation, and the courageous witness of the Prophets. We can imagine him asking his mother to read again and again the great challenge of Elijah on Mount Carmel. He may have played with our Lord as a boy on occasional visits to one another's homes. He may have tended the flocks of sheep "in the deserts" (St. Luke i. 80), where on the hillsides in silence and solitude the Spirit of God would have spoken to him, and the word of God have matured in his heart.

## 3. HIS ASCETIC LIFE.

"The Word of God came unto John" (St. Luke iii. 2).

St. John was not an Essene—and perhaps not a

Nazarite. His life of simplicity and austerity was an individual self-discipline under the absorbing pressure of the Word which had taken possession of him: it was born from within by spiritual fervour.

(i.) *Eastern and Christian Asceticism.*

The asceticism of the great religions of the East is based on a philosophy of pessimism which looks on life as wholly evil and endeavours to escape from it by killing desire. Christian asceticism is based on a philosophy of optimism, the belief in the creative power of the Holy Spirit, that the background of the Universe is Love, and that life is good, but that the bias to selfishness in our fallen nature needs constant correction and self-discipline. The motive of Eastern asceticism is to kill desire: the motive of Christian asceticism is to consecrate it.

(ii.) *Does Asceticism impoverish Life?*

Yes: if mortifications are imposed from without by the community without any corresponding movement of the heart. No life is as a rule more spiritually barren than the simple, mortified, austere, and disciplined life of a convict in a prison, because the denial and deprivation is imposed by the community from without by force. But if mortification or self-denial springs from the consecration of the spirit to a holy purpose, the absorption of heart and mind in a divine mission, and the desire to win perfect self-control of every activity of the person in body, mind, and spirit as it did in St. John the Baptist, then it has our Lord's approval and authority. We voluntarily abstain from certain things that are lawful in order that the energy which would have been dissipated in pleasure may be concentrated on the purpose of our life. We prune our life at the circumference in order that it may grow stronger and more intense at the centre, as in the pruning of a vine that its life may not be wasted in leaves and tendrils, but may bear more fruit. Modern civilisation with its delirium



of restless activity demands stern self-denial and self-restraint.

Thus St. John the Baptist, possessed by the word of God which burned up every other thought, appeared in the wilderness of Judæa, "his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins: and his food was locusts and wild honey" (St. Matt. iii. 4).

*Consider.*—Am I using God's gifts aright? or am I yielding to the soft pleasures of the flesh and the life of luxury, serving the creature more than the Creator? Am I restrained in my use of food, eating to live, or am I living to eat? Does the love of comforts and the fear of discomforts make me shrink from undertaking a hard work? Does it unnerve my will for the fulfilment of some unpleasant duty? Do I allow my imagination and thoughts to wander about unchecked instead of concentrating them upon some worthy object? Many lives are a tragedy of aimlessness, years of hard labour in the pursuit of pleasure and penal servitude to self-indulgence. O God, give me a noble aim, a living word, a work to do for Thee and for the coming of Thy Kingdom. The Holy Spirit will surely guide each soul, who seeks His help as to the best way to subdue our lower nature and to win self-control and the harmonious activity of all the energies of our personality.

#### 4. HIS MESSAGE.

He grew up in a National Church which was dead in spiritual pride, among men who boasted of an assured salvation from a mistaken interpretation of God's election. "We have Abraham to our Father" (St. Matt. iii. 9). "The Temple of the Lord are these" (Jer. vii. 4). Religion had become divorced from ethics, and strangled by minute observance of the ceremonial law. The poor were oppressed. External observance of religious rites had been substituted for spiritual communion with God, and righteousness and holiness of life. They were trusting in their privileges, and



St. John had to convict them of sin and to convert them to personal union with God, so that when the Messiah should come He would find a people ready to welcome Him. The common people heard him gladly, being baptised by him and repenting and confessing their sins. But the Pharisees and Sadducees, blinded with spiritual pride, came without repentance to add another to their external ablutions by his baptism and aroused his wrath.

*Consider.*—As long as man is made up of body, soul, and spirit, religion must have a corresponding threefold aspect, the institutional, the ethical, and the mystical. And as the body must be subordinated to the soul, and the soul inspired by the spirit, so the institutional aspect of religion must be severely subordinated to the demand for righteousness, and that righteousness must draw its life from God, and not from self or family or nation. But this balance and subordination is easily lost. Institutional religion tends to form habits of external behaviour and conformity which may continue to regulate our outward life long after the devout impulse which gave them birth has died away. How easy it is to substitute outward ordinances and sacraments for living communion with the living God. How easy it is for us to imagine that because we are baptised and confirmed and receive Holy Communion we are all right: unaware that we have lost our first love and are dead.

How often men make an idol of the letter of Scripture, and relying on an experience of God in the past and the use of Biblical phrases and evangelical expressions imagine themselves God's elect—when they are really dead in spiritual pride, showing none of the fruits of the Spirit, forgetful that the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life. How often the regular churchgoer, or pious nonconformist, absorbed in the trivialities of what they think is "religious controversy," a mere "tithing of mint and anise and cummin," leave the preaching of the Gospel of Righteousness and the championship of

the poor to the efforts of those who do not own allegiance to our Lord.

How easy it is to be blinded to the real vital issues of religion, the right relationship of man to man in the family of God, by family pride, by vested interests, by class prejudices, as were the Pharisees of old.

How hard it is to detach ourselves from those class prejudices which have surrounded us like the atmosphere from our childhood, in our home, our school, our college, in the conversation of our parents, our companions, our friends, until they have become second nature. How hard it is to detach ourselves from vested interests and to give a righteous judgment on social reforms which may involve some serious personal financial loss.

St. John the Baptist had to face all these petrified forms of externalised religion, and flung down his challenge to those two passions, Pride and Prejudice, which crucified our Lord on Calvary. "Ye offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" (St. Matt. iii. 7). That challenge needs to be repeated today.

## 5. THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

The Gospel of God is primarily and essentially social, the Gospel of a redeemed Society, not merely of redeemed individuals. The Jewish Church had failed to fulfil God's purpose, as any Church must which becomes an end in itself instead of a means to the coming of God's Kingdom. God is about to "open the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers." The ground of election is to pass from physical inheritance to spiritual responsiveness; from the nation to the Catholic Church. So St. John preaches the repentance of individuals that they may be fit to welcome the Messiah and to be baptised "with the Holy Ghost and with fire" (St. Matt. iii. 11).

*Consider—The Peril of Ecclesiasticism.*

It is right that we should love our country and our Church, and consecrate ourselves to their service. But

we must not love them as ends in themselves, only as means to the coming of God's Kingdom on earth as it is in Heaven. The true patriot is indifferent to the wealth and size and splendour of our Empire. He knows that only "righteousness exalteth a nation." His love for his country makes him passionately long that it may stand for those spiritual principles, Righteousness, Justice, Faith, and Freedom, which are the very pillars of the Throne of God, and only bond of the Brotherhood of Man. The true Churchman will not boast of the wealth, or numbers or splendour of his Church. His love for his Church and his loyalty to her will make him passionately desire that the Church may fulfil its purpose of establishing the Kingdom of God in the hearts of men. He will not say with the Church of Laodicea, "I am rich, and have gotten riches, and have need of nothing," while the stern judgment of God on our lukewarmness is, "Thou art the wretched one and miserable and poor and blind and naked" (Rev. iii. 17). He will "repent" and "be zealous." He will seek to enrich the Church with his prayers and devotion and worship, his righteousness and justice; so that the grave-clothes of formalism may fade away in the splendour of the Risen Life, and the lukewarm may glow with the flame of the Holy Spirit.

## CONCLUSION

Christians today have a great opportunity. For everywhere men are feeling the failure of life organised apart from God, and there is a wide disillusionment and dissatisfaction—all the signs of a decaying civilisation are apparent: the refusal of religious authority, the decay of moral sanctions, the diminishing birth-rate, the over-stimulated delirious activity of life. For in these last days grievous times have come. Men are "lovers of self, lovers of money, lovers of pleasure, rather than lovers of God" (2 Tim. iii. 2). This idolatry of self, money, and pleasure is steadily moving

on towards its inevitable climax, the suicide of the human race in a world war. Only the coming of God's Kingdom in Righteousness and Justice can avert this. Only the power of the Holy Spirit can change the hearts of men so that they shall love and desire God. The Holy Spirit can only manifest Himself through the hearts and lives of consecrated men and women. Yield yourself in entire self-surrender to God, then He will fill you with the Holy Spirit to co-operate with Him in reviving the Church and in redeeming the human race, and fulfilling His Will.

NOTE A.—THE NEED OF MEDITATION.

About eighty years ago Père Grou warned souls against this peril of restless, aimless activity in words that are still more true today than when he wrote them in an address to priests :

“ We are all more and more deficient in depth and recollection. The world moves on with ever-increasing rapidity. Movement becomes multiplied and intensified in every shape—moral, intellectual, and physical. And beneath this surface movement, I fear, one discovers that there is a slackening of central impetus. We whirl about more, but we advance less.

“ It is a universal blot; every living thing finds the difficulty of self-recollection, of gathering itself together and abiding steadfast at the heart's core. . . .

“ It is that which St. Bernard calls *evisceratio mentis*, ‘the disembowelling of the soul.’ St. Augustine alludes to the same evil, *viscera quædam animæ*, when he says that a man throws the inner depths of his soul into his outer life.

“ Life hurries on, spreads itself far and wide, but the source of life dries up. Mental and spiritual progress consists in intensifying the inward life. There is a mighty central life within the vast sphere of a man's soul which seems to be forgotten, unheeded, and deserted by all—a neglected sanctuary, a lost fountain head.

“ In days of old there were monks whose whole life was absorbed in this great centre, and who found peace, light, and happiness therein. To them it furnished the motive power, the life of all things. But in these days where shall we find such calm, deep minds, dwelling in the invisible, wrapt in heavenly things, ever facing eastward amid the whirl of life? Who now believes in recollection, retirement, and prayer?

“ All our strength, as priests, lies in prayer and faith, nourished in our souls by recollection and retirement, by the habit of that interior life which alone fosters holiness, light, and love. We shall never become useful ministers of the Gospel by multiplying our surface efforts, or by accumulating good works: that can only be done through the mighty power of a humble heart which leans on God, of a thoughtful soul which drinks deep of Him. The soul without recollection is as a body without sleep: fever must come on and death ensue.”

NOTE B.—PLATO ON INTELLECTUAL CONCENTRATION.

1. *Meditation* (*Phaedo*, Jowett, vol. i., p. 409, § 65).

“ What, again, shall we say of the actual acquirement of knowledge? Is the body, if invited to share in the inquiry, a hinderer or a helper? I mean to say, have sight or hearing any truth in them? Are they not, as the poets are always telling us, inaccurate witnesses? And yet, if even they are inaccurate and indistinct, what is to be said of the other senses? For you will allow that they are the best of them?” “ Certainly,” he replied. “ Then where does the soul attain truth? for in attempting to consider everything in company with the body she is obviously deceived.” “ Yes, that is true.” “ Then must not existence be revealed to her in thought, if at all?” “ Yes.” “ And thought is best when the mind is gathered and none of these things trouble her—neither sounds, nor sights, nor pain, nor any pleasure—when she has as little as possible to do

with the body, and has no bodily sense or feeling, but is aspiring after being ?” “ That is true.”

## 2. *Absolute Values.*

“ Well, there is another thing, Simmias: Is there, or is there not, an absolute justice ?” “ Assuredly there is.” “ And an absolute beauty and absolute good ?” “ Of course.” “ And did you ever behold any of them with your eyes ?” “ Certainly not.” “ Or did you ever reach them with any other bodily sense ? (And I speak not of them alone, but of absolute greatness, and health, and strength, and of the essence or true nature of everything.) Has the reality of them ever been perceived by you through the bodily organs ? Or, rather, is not the nearest approach to them the knowledge of their several natures made by him who so orders his intellectual vision as to have the most exact conception of the essence of that which he considers ?” “ Certainly.”

“ And he attains to the knowledge of them in their highest purity who goes to each of them with the mind alone, not allowing, when in the act of thought, the intrusion or introduction of sight or any other sense in the company of reason, but with the very light of the mind in her clearness penetrated into the very light of truth in each; he has got rid as far as he can of eyes and ears and of the whole body, which he conceives of only as a disturbing element, hindering the soul from the acquisition of knowledge when in company with her—is not this the sort of man who, if ever man did, is likely to attain the knowledge of existence ?” “ There is admirable truth in that, Socrates,” replied Simmias. (*Phaedo*, Jowett, vol. i.)

## VIII. THE SPIRIT OF WISDOM

There is much need at the present time in England to recapture the conception of Wisdom as revealed to us in the Wisdom literature of the Bible, in the Book of



Proverbs, Job, Song of Songs, the Wisdom of Solomon, and the Book of the Wisdom of Jesus, the son of Sirach, called Ecclesiasticus.

## 1. THE MEANING OF WISDOM.

The conception of Wisdom put before us in these Books is in striking contrast with two modern tendencies:

(a) The arid intellectualism of the Modernists who are obsessed with the scientific method of criticism and often mistake their critical apparatus for Reality, and whose conception of Wisdom is much more that of the Greek philosophers than of the Bible.

(b) The somewhat arrogant claims of some who revolt against this barren intellectualism, and preach an esoteric wisdom which is not for the common man; whose hidden secrets are known only to the few "enlightened ones."

In contrast with these the Wisdom taught us in the Bible has these characteristics:

*It is Universal, rather than National.*

It is not confined to the chosen race, the select people. "The Spirit of the Lord hath filled the world" (Wisd. i. 7). It is offered to all and freely given to those who seek it. It is the one thing worth living for; the one thing which gives meaning and purpose to man's life. It is a kind of commonsense philosophy of life with a strong religious tendency. It has to do with all the details of social life, with art and craft, with statesmanship and commerce, military skill, learning, tact and taste. It is that for which we ask when in the Collect for Whitsunday we pray for a "right judgment in all things."

*It is Moral rather than Intellectual.*

It is that "wisdom and understanding" (Deut. iv. 6) which enables a person to be sensible in contrast to the folly of the fool. Its marks as an energy of the Spirit of the Lord are given in Isa. xi. 2: "The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom



and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord . . . with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth . . . and righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins."

It was regarded as a gift from God bestowed freely on anyone who had that reverent attitude toward Him which is called "the fear of the Lord," and a desire to walk in His ways. For some degree of moral affinity with God is essential before God can communicate Himself to man; and the Sages carried on this message of the Prophets that a righteous character is the only passport to the favour of God.

## 2. THE GIFT OF GOD.

(1) David said to Solomon, "Only the Lord give thee discretion and understanding" (1 Chron. xxii. 12). Solomon prayed, "Give thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and evil" (1 Kings iii. 9).

(2) "And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart" (1 Kings iv. 29).

(3) "My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and lay up My commandment with thee, so that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; if thou seek her as silver, and search for her as for hid treasures, then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God" (Prov. ii. 1).

(4) "For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding: He layeth up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to them that walk in integrity that He may guard the paths of judgment and preserve the way of His saints.

"Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity, yea, every good path, for wisdom shall enter into thine heart and knowledge shall be

pleasant unto thy soul; discretion shall watch over thee; understanding shall keep thee; to deliver thee from the way of evil, from the men that speak froward things" (Prov. ii. 6).

(5) "For to the man that pleaseth Him God giveth wisdom and knowledge and joy; but to the sinner He giveth travail, to gather and to heap up that he may give to him that pleaseth God" (Eccles. ii. 26).

Sin is a barrier to the reception of this gift of the Holy Spirit or Wisdom.

"Because Wisdom will not enter into a soul that deviseth evil, nor dwell in a body that is held in pledge by sin; for a holy spirit of discipline will flee deceit, and will start away from thoughts that are without understanding, and will be put to confusion when unrighteousness hath come in" (Wisd. i. 4).

### 3. ITS CHARACTERISTICS.

(6) "But where shall wisdom be found? And where is the place of understanding? Man knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living. The deep saith, It is not in me, and the sea saith, It is not with me. It cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof" (Job xxviii. 12-15).

"Destruction and Death say, We have heard a rumour thereof with our ears.

"God understandeth the way thereof, and He knoweth the place thereof" (Job xxviii. 22, 23).

And unto man He said: "Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding" (Job xxviii. 28).

(7) "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all they that do thereafter; His praise endureth for ever" (Ps. cxi. 10).

(8) "Then I saw that wisdom excelleth folly as far as light excelleth darkness" (Eccles. ii. 13).

From these passages it will be seen that Hebrew

Wisdom is not the same as Greek Philosophy. Wisdom is moral: Philosophy is intellectual. Wisdom is practical: Philosophy is speculative. "The axioms of the one are the conclusions of the other" (Bishop Westcott). Philosophy starts with the world as it is, and may or may not find God in it: Wisdom begins with God and seeks to interpret all human life in relationship to Him.

But knowledge as understood by Socrates is "a certain overmastering principle or power that lays hold primarily indeed of the intellect, but through the intellect of the entire personality, moulding and disciplining the will and the emotions into absolute unison with itself, a principle from which courage, temperance, justice, and every other virtue inevitably flow." (Dr. J. Adam, *The Religious Teachers of Greece*, p. 329.)

It is interesting to find this moral conception of Wisdom in the teaching of Confucius, who ranks it as one of the five cardinal virtues—Benevolence, Righteousness, Propriety, Wisdom, and Sincerity.

#### 4. THE HOLY SPIRIT OF WISDOM.

How far can we identify the Holy Spirit with the Wisdom of the Old Testament and of the Apocrypha? It seems that in the historical order the Personality of the Holy Spirit was not realised until revealed in the teaching of our Lord and the experience of Pentecost and of the early Church. There were three stages in the estimate of Wisdom before the Incarnation. At first it was recognised as an attribute of God, a virtue which gave a balanced judgment and a general harmony of personality to those who were in communion with God and under the influence of "the Spirit of the Lord." Then this virtue was personified in poetic utterance, which had no theological or philosophical significance, as when Wordsworth in his "Ode to Duty" calls Duty "stern daughter of the voice of God"; until in the later writings Wisdom is taken to be more than an attribute

of God, and seems to function as an intermediary between God and man, carrying out God's purposes in the Universe.

Then in the Church of Pentecost the experience of His activities led men to realise the meaning of our Lord's teaching, to recognise the Holy Spirit as a Person who can be grieved and resisted and whose presence can be quenched. The fact that St. Paul calls Christ "The Wisdom of God" in no way hinders us from identifying the Wisdom of the Old Testament with the Holy Spirit, for no separation must be made between the activities of the three Persons of the Ever-blessed Trinity, which may be distinguished, but must never be divided.

All God's revelation of Himself must be understood in two processes, the historical and the logical order. Historically men only awaken gradually to realise the truth, often by a long process of conflict between truth and error, and through the gradual correction of mistakes and misunderstanding. It is like the gradual restoration of sight to the blind man, who first "saw men as trees walking," and then, after the Lord had again laid on His hands, the man "looked stedfastly, and was restored and saw all things clearly" (St. Mark viii. 24). So gradually by experience and reflection on experience man awakens to the Vision of the Truth. Then he can see things no longer merely in the historical order of his growth in knowledge, but now in the logical order. His realisation of the truth enables him to throw the new light back over the past and to re-interpret his whole experience in new terms. What before to his imperfect understanding seemed to be mechanical or accidental is seen now to have been personal and providential. On such grounds as these it seems legitimate to use the passages of the Wisdom literature in our devotional meditation on the Holy Spirit.

The Rev. R. Birch Hoyle, in his excellent work, *The Holy Spirit in St. Paul*, p. 236, admirably describes

the unity in thought between Philo, the author of *Wisdom*, and St. Paul.

"Common to all three is the thought that 'the Spirit' is the connecting medium between man and God. 'Who would ever have gained knowledge of Thy counsel except Thou hadst given him Wisdom and hadst sent Thy Holy Spirit from the heights?' asks the writer of *Wisdom*. 'The Spirit (as effect and result) is the pure knowledge in which every wise man has a part,' says Philo, 'for if there were not a divine spirit to lead and guide the mind to truth, it would not so skilfully hit the target.' All three recognise in man's constitution by creation an original endowment of spirit from his Maker, which on the bodily side links him to other living beings on the earth, but on the mental side raises him *toto cælo* above them. . . . All three agree that the original endowment of spirit is insufficient of itself to lift man up to God, yet it supplies a *point d'appui* for a further endowment when man has attained to self-conscious moral life. But at that point St. Paul passes beyond the other two, for to him moral life is not the spiritual when seen in the light of his own Christian experience."

All three unite in using figures of speech, drawn from material and substantial objects, in finding the distinctive property of "spirit" to be power and force. "But the parting of the ways appears when the effect of the coming of the Divine Spirit upon the 'mind,' 'heart,' 'inward man' is presented."

Though Wisdom is often spoken of as "she" in the Old Testament, this is by poetic licence, rightly using a pronoun of personality rather than the impersonal "it," and has no more connection with sex than when Wordsworth, in his line quoted above, calls Duty a "daughter." There is nothing in Scripture to encourage the sentimental idea which sometimes finds expression that the Holy Spirit is the Mother element in the Godhead. This may be dismissed as it is in

conflict with the activity of the Holy Spirit in the Incarnation, and it is carrying metaphor too far to read ideas of sex into the Godhead. Bi-parentalism is a late introduction into the methods of propagating life, and appears only to have been introduced with a view to giving a double inheritance to the new unit of life. Scripture gives no support whatever to this sentimental suggestion; and shows us the Holy Spirit as a Hidden Personality who wills to be known to us only by symbols. While the titles Father and Son have the authority of our Lord for their use, the Holy Spirit is known to us only under such symbols as the Dove, the Flame of Fire, Water, and the Bond of Fellowship. He seems to desire to distract attention from Himself in order that He may the better fulfil His function of interpreting Christ to us. "But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you" (St. John xv. 26). "No man can say, Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. xii. 3). The Mother element in redemption is to be supplied by the human race, as when it offered its loftiest flower to God in our Lady.

Perhaps the best description of what Wisdom has meant in all its varied aspects is to be found in that great summary of Christian ethics which is given in the Catechism in the Book of Common Prayer in use in the Church of England. It is taught to and learned by heart by all who are being prepared for Confirmation. Woven into the mind and heart of a large section of our population at an age when they are most impressionable, it has probably had a considerable influence in forming the strong ethical sense which marks the British character with a great devotion to duty. If its phrases are rightly interpreted, it forms an admirable scheme of self-examination of conscience before Communion. On two points it has been so habitually misquoted by those who make attacks on the Church that it should be noted:



1. We are not told to “do my duty in that state of life unto which it *has* pleased God to call me.” This would be a petrification of those odious class distinctions left behind by a dead Feudalism, which have introduced a schism into the Family of God and are as un-Christian as the caste system in India. The words of the Catechism are “unto which it *shall* please God to call me.” This is a sanction and stimulus for unceasing progress; and if any one does not intend to try to do this, he should say so at once, so that the call may pass to some one more worthy.

2. The second mistake is that in the reference to “my betters” many persons have unconsciously interpreted it as though it were “my richer neighbours.” But though this was probably the original meaning, for the Catechism was first drawn up at a time when society was severely stratified on either feudal or plutocratic standards, yet the word is “betters” and not “richers,” and it contains a valuable principle of social development—the capacity to recognise merit when one sees it, and the loyalty to support our leaders when we have chosen them.

#### MY DUTY TOWARDS GOD.

“My duty towards God is to believe in Him, to fear Him, and to love Him with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength: to worship Him, to give Him thanks, to put my whole trust in Him, to call upon Him, to honour His Holy Name and His Word, and to serve Him truly all the days of my life.”

#### MY DUTY TOWARDS MY NEIGHBOUR.

“My duty towards my neighbour is to love him as myself, and to do to all men, as I would they should do unto me: To love, honour, and succour my father and mother: To honour and obey the King, and all that are put in authority under him: To submit myself to all my governors, teachers, spiritual pastors, and masters:



To order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters: To hurt nobody by word nor deed: To be true and just in all my dealing: To bear no malice nor hatred in my heart: To keep my hands from picking and stealing, and my tongue from evil-speaking, lying, and slandering: To keep my body in temperance, soberness, and chastity: Not to covet nor desire other men's goods; but to learn and labour truly to get mine own living, and to do my duty in that state of life unto which it shall please God to call me."

### CONCLUSION.

We may well conclude these thoughts on the Spirit of Wisdom, and on the way in which the Holy Spirit prepared the World for the Incarnation of the Word of God, by quoting that passage in which Plato has expressed both the nobility and the inadequacy of Philosophy, so noble in its fearless loyalty to Truth, so pathetic in its yearning for Revelation. This will serve, too, as a worthy introduction to meditations on God's answer to man's need.

### WAITING FOR THE DIVINE WORD.

Simmius. "For I daresay that you, Socrates, feel as I do, how very hard, or almost impossible is the attainment of any certainty about questions such as these in the present life. And yet I should deem him a coward who does not prove what is said about them to the uttermost, or whose heart failed before he had examined them on every side. For he should persevere until he has attained one of two things: either he should discover or learn the truth about them; or if this is impossible, I would have him take the best and most irrefragable of human notions, and let this be the raft upon which he sails through life—not without risk, as I admit, if he cannot find some word of God which will more surely and safely carry him" (*Phædo*, § 85, p. 434).

## PART II

### THE SPIRIT OF LOVE

#### IN REDEMPTION AND SANCTIFICATION

#### THE SPIRIT OF LOVE

IN the first part we have thought of the work of the Holy Spirit in the cosmic and historical spheres, stimulating and guiding the development of those powers and instincts which God had implanted. We have meditated on the upward march of life from the most minute amœba to the brain of man. We have seen this process of evolution stop at the formation of man's body, and traced its further activity in the evolution of the mind, the conscience and social intercourse. We have seen the process of evolution as it passes from its first stage when life is driven up from below by fear of death, to its second stage when man is drawn up from above by love of life. We have meditated upon the way in which the primitive instincts of a beast were disciplined and purified and sublimated to become the passion of a God. We have touched on God's method of self-revelation by election and inspiration. The ideal of the Good, the Beautiful, and the True has been unveiled as a Heavenly Vision by the Holy Spirit. "The invisible things of God since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and divinity" (Rom. i. 20). The unveiling of God's holiness and righteousness has convicted man of sin, and the Holy Spirit has inspired the hope of the coming of a Deliverer from sin.

This long course of preparation had at last prepared

man's nature for union with God. In this part we shall give material for meditation on the Holy Spirit's work in Redemption and Sanctification, as He conceives and consecrates the Humanity of Christ, and unites us to the Risen and Ascended Christ and interprets Him to us as "the Wisdom and Power of God" (1 Cor. i. 24).

## I. THE ANNUNCIATION

*Read:* St. Luke i. 26-38.

*Text:* St. Luke i. 35: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee: wherefore also that which is to be born shall be called holy, the Son of God."

PICTURE (1) *The Blessed Virgin Mary*, a simple village maiden in her home at Nazareth; helping her mother in household work; going to the well to draw water; giving kindly greeting to those she meets; at night kneeling by her bedside at her prayers.

(2) *God* "to whom all hearts are open, all desires known," looking down into the heart of Mary. What radiant purity He beholds! What unselfishness! What fervent aspirations! What grief at her people's servitude! What longing for the promised Deliverer, the Messiah, the Christ! What a yearning that she might be the Mother of the Lord!

(3) *See the Archangel Gabriel* appear to her.

*Feel* her awe. *Hear* his words.

CONSIDER—(1) THE REVERSAL OF VALUES.

One of the signs of God's activity in history is the entire reversal of all worldly valuation, "the first shall be the last and the last first." Those things which the worldly man counts to be greatest prove to be of little permanent importance; while those things he esteems the least, history proves to be the greatest. If nineteen hundred years ago you had asked a Galilean peasant what was the most important utterance of his age, if he had had a modern mind he would have mentioned

the decree of an Emperor, or the command of a General, or the speech of a politician, or the song of a poet, or the wisdom of a philosopher. If you had suggested that the really important thing was a maiden's answer to an Angel's message, he would have mocked at your superstition and credulity, and said that girls should not be encouraged to give way to their imagination in this manner. And yet, when every other sound had died away and been forgotten before the tongue of the speaker had rotted in the grave, the Angel's whisper to a maiden's heart, so delicate, so fragile, so ethereal, has won from the ages an eternal echo: and today hundreds of millions of Christians re-echo the Angel's words, "Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee."

Again, we rejoice to recognise in our Lady the crown of the process of evolution, the priceless flower of the human race. Her picture or her statue adorns countless Christian churches throughout the world. She is known and loved and revered by millions in every land. But it was not so at first. At first she was an unimportant village maiden, in a cottage home.

This reversal and transvaluation of all values when they are touched by Christ must remind us of the priceless value of the individual if he is at one with God, of the power of prayer to transform the world, of the value of simplicity and of a single-hearted desire to do God's will. It fills us with a new reverence for personality, and a new contempt for the world's standard of values.

## (2) SELF-SURRENDER.

We are constantly tempted to rely on what the world values—wealth, intellect, power, influence, social status. But man cannot redeem himself. His powers and gifts are non-moral—*i.e.*, neither good nor bad in themselves, but dependent on the way in which they are used whether they become good or bad. Science, education, philosophy, wealth, used aright, may help to bring God's Kingdom on earth. But they may also be used to

hinder the coming of God's Kingdom, for the destruction of the human race as often as for its salvation. In the war science destroyed as many as it healed. In peace wealth often degrades a man more than poverty. The use of these things and their moral significance depends on the conversion of the heart and its response to God.

But the heart is often dominated by strong inherited or acquired instincts, impulses, desires, passions, and emotions which deflect it from its best aspirations. Ovid said, "I see the better and approve it: I do the worse." St. Paul cried, "For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me, but to do that which is good is not. For the good which I would I do not: but the evil which I would not that I practise. . . . O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?" (Rom. vii. 18). Man cannot save himself. All he can do is to surrender himself by faith to God, and to allow God to work in him that which he cannot do for himself.

So we thank God for our Lady's answer to the Angel's message, and pray Him that we may make it our own. She did not yield herself with merely passive acquiescence, but with energetic co-operation to God's purpose. "Behold, the handmaid of the Lord: be it unto me according to thy word." We must do the same. We must not cry, "Thy will be borne," but "Thy will be done," and eagerly strive to co-operate with every movement of God's Holy Spirit in our souls.

Ask yourself: Is my response to God whole-hearted and eager? My self-surrender absolute and complete? Or am I holding back something? Refusing to abandon some sinful or risky pleasure?

### (3) THE POWER OF THE MOST HIGH.

It is not enough for man to have light. He needs strength. Sin has not only blinded his mind and deadened his heart, it has also weakened his will. God

cannot redeem us merely by showing us the Heavenly Vision. It is the chief tragedy of human life that we see and know and love the good and cannot do it steadfastly. If God had merely given us in His Son the example of a perfect human life, it would have filled us with despair. Like the crippled, hunchbacked child in the art gallery at Versailles gazing at the statue of Apollo and then looking down with tears at his own misshapen limbs and withered muscles, we should have gazed at the perfect example of our Lord's life and then looked down on our futile resolutions and broken promises, and withered resolutions and cried, "Ah! I can never be like Him!" Christianity is not merely the Gospel of a Good Example. It is primarily the Gospel of Power from on High: of the strength of God coming to reinforce our weakness.

*Power (dunamis, dynamite).*—God is not merely the Heavenly Vision—mere Loveliness. He is also Force—Energy—Activity—Efficiency. The first Christians were vividly conscious of a spiritual force at work upon them which did not spring from their own nature. St. Paul writes: "That ye may know . . . what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward that believe, according to that working of the strength of His might" (Eph. i. 19). *Dunamis, energeia, kratos, ischus.* All words of vigour and strength. Only an inherited religion of convention can represent Christianity as weak, passive, anæmic. The religion of experience is an experience of power and might. At the Annunciation this energy of God, this creative power of the Holy Spirit, is emphasised. "The power of the Most High shall overshadow thee" (*dunamis*) (St. Luke i. 35). "No word of God shall be void of power" (*adunanesei*) (St. Luke i. 37). "He that is mighty (*ho dunatos*) hath done great things for me" (St. Luke i. 49). "He hath showed strength (*kratos*) with His arm" (St. Luke i. 51). The whole message is one of supernatural power, strength, might, energy.

CONSIDER.—

Am I, from lack of faith, relying on my own thoughts, capacities, strength of mind and of will? Or am I by prayer, communion, and meditation, drawing on the inexhaustible power of God? Do I seek the peace of apathy which is all I have in myself? Or do I seek the peace which comes from that self-surrender and faith, that confidence in God that He will work in me the peace which passeth understanding, which knows that God will work in me what I cannot accomplish for myself?

## II. THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST

Meditate on St. Luke ii. 1-21.

CONSIDER—I. THE COLLECT FOR CHRISTMAS DAY.

Almighty God, Who hast given us Thy only-begotten Son to take our nature upon Him, and as at this time to be born of a pure Virgin, Grant that we, being regenerate and made Thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by Thy Holy Spirit; through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the same Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

CONSIDER—

(1) “*Almighty*” (*Panto-krator*, All Ruler).

The laws of the Universe are nothing but the normal expression of His will. The Universe itself is His unfolding thought. God is to the Universe as your soul is to your body, all-penetrating, all-sustaining, through and through, above and beyond. As He called the Universe into existence, so He can call into existence any new force which is necessary to arrest the spoiling of His work or provide for the fulfilment of His will.

“O God, creation’s secret force,  
Thyself unmoved, all motion’s source.”



(2) "*Hast given.*"—Christ is not evolved from below, but bestowed from above. He is not merely the highest effort of man: He is the gift of God. Since God gives Himself to me, there is only one adequate response. I must give myself to Him, and with the same utter self-abandonment.

(3) "*To take our nature upon Him.*"—More than the mere garment of the body: our nature, heart, mind, will, our feelings, limitations, outlook. This *is* the Atonement, the At-oneing, the reunion, by which man is restored to union with God.

(4) "*And to be born of a pure Virgin.*"—Christ is the Lord of all life. "All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that hath been made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men" (St. John i. 3). Scientists tell us that bi-parentalism (*i.e.*, birth from two parents) was a later development in the methods of reproduction observed in Nature: and was introduced not with a view to reproduction, but to give the new unit a double outfit of inherited characteristics. When the Lord of all Life, the Lord of the amœba as well as of man, Himself enters the historical series of Time and Space, it is unnecessary to have two parents. The Virgin birth is for Him the most congruous entrance into the Time series; just as a Virgin birth of Water and the Spirit is the most congruous entrance for us mortals, the creatures of Time and Space, into the realm of Eternal Life.

How rich and full is His union with us! Birth is the essential beginning of all life. He begins at the beginning, and experiences the whole process and discipline of each unfolding activity of our human nature.

(5) "*We, being regenerate.*"—Salvation does not come from within. It comes from above, a free gift from God. It is the birth within our souls of something which we have not of ourselves, of a spiritual power working at the springs of our life and personality, which makes us a new creation.

Just as Christ, born at Bethlehem into an unwilling and unconscious world, is the new principle of life which will quicken and renew the race, so in Holy Baptism before we were capable of deliberate choice, God implanted in the very roots of our personality the Christ-life which will gradually quicken and sanctify our whole being. Recall your Baptism with joy and gratitude. You are a twice-born son of God. You have within you a power which has overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil.

(6) "*Children by adoption and Grace.*"—Not by inherent right as with Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, but by the loving appropriation by which God our Father makes us His own. This is an additional source of gratitude, because He might not have adopted us.

(7) "*May daily be renewed by Thy Holy Spirit.*"—Every day some speck settles on our soul, some bad thought stains the mind, some self-willed desire deflects the will, some impact with the world weakens our faith, some disappointment dims our hope, some lust inflames our passions and chills our love for God. The thrill and joy of the Christian life is that it begins afresh each day, and we live from day to day in trustful reliance on God's Providence. Day by day the Holy Spirit renews in us whatever may have been destroyed, and cleanses what is soiled, and strengthens what is weak. Worldly optimism is sustained by refusing to face the facts, and it cannot last. Christian optimism is based on the belief and the experience of the Creative Power of the Holy Spirit, Who chooses "the things that are not to bring to nought the things that are" (1 Cor. i. 28). The joy of the Christian is that every day the hope and expectation of youth is renewed within him, and that life is full of boundless possibilities and has Eternity for its fulfilment. This spring and secret of undying hope and eternal youth is in the daily renewing by the Holy Spirit.

## 2. A PRAYER TO JESUS.

O Lord Jesus Christ, Maker, Redeemer, Lover and Benefactor of Mankind, Who graciously hearest those who call upon Thee, have mercy on me.

Cleanse me, I pray Thee, by Thy most holy Incarnation and Passion from all sin.

Cast down in me all haughtiness of pride: destroy all arrogance: break in pieces and utterly crush all hardness of heart and stubbornness.

Subdue all bitterness of spirit which is contrary to sincere love.

Calm the troubled risings of impatience. Repress and quell the wild impulse and madness of anger; extinguish the wrong desire of vainglory.

Root out and destroy the evil motions of a wicked will.

Take from me whatever in me displeases Thee, and give me what is pleasing to Thee.

Teach, enlighten, direct, assist, protect and keep me every hour and moment of my life, that I may do those things which are pleasing to Thee and rest secure in Thee for ever.

## 3. OF THE NATURE AND NECESSITY OF REGENERATION, OR THE NEW BIRTH.

These passages from William Law's *Essays* are inserted not as giving an historical account of the development of the race, for the study of anthropology suggests that when man emerged from the cave he did not fully correspond to William Law's description of the first man, nor can we regard the state of nature as one of total corruption (see below), but because they truly represent the experience of the individual. Each of us has in some degree experienced the peace and joy of innocence in childhood before our eyes were open to good and evil. Each of us, alas, has some experience of our own fall, and the distraction and sorrow it has brought to us and to others. I have inserted the headings and summarised the whole.

(i.) *The Image of God.*

Man was created by God after His own image in His own likeness, a living Mirror of the Divine Nature, where Father, Son, and Holy Spirit each brought forth their own Nature in a creaturely manner.

Whilst man continued an unbroken image of the Holy Trinity, he was necessarily in Paradise, in the open enjoyment of the Kingdom of God. He stood indeed upon the earth with the same outward world about him, but Paradise was over all the cover of all; and therefore he neither saw nor felt either his own outward body or the things of this outward world in the manner as we now see and feel them.

Before his Fall his seeing was divine, by means of a divine light shining forth from the Kingdom of God. It was there with him as with the heavenly city of which St. John says, "It had no need of the sun neither of the moon to shine in it; for the glory of God did enlighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." After the Fall, when the image of the Holy Trinity was broken in him, this divine light departed from him, and he was left to the firmamental light of this world. . . .

Now by his transgression this image of the Holy Trinity was broken: the generation of the Son or Word and the proceeding of the Holy Ghost in him were at an end; in the day that he sinned, in that day he died this death. And therefore what was he as to his soul? What must be said of it? It was something that was deprived of that Birth which was the brightness of its glory, and which should be that to it which the Son of God is to the Father; it wanted that Spirit which was its amiable life, and which was to be that to it which the Holy Ghost is to the Father and the Son.

(ii.) *Our Fallen Nature.*

Who has not at one time or other felt a sourness, wrath, selfishness, envy, and pride which he could not tell what to do with, or how to bear, rising up in him

without his consent, casting a blackness over all his thoughts, and then as suddenly going off again, either by the cheerfulness of the sun or air, or some agreeable accident, and again at times as suddenly returning upon him? Sufficient indications are these to every man that there is a dark Guest within him concealed under the cover of flesh and blood, often lulled asleep by worldly light and amusements, yet such as will in spite of everything show itself, which if it has not its proper relief (*i.e.*, cure or redemption) in this life must be his torment in eternity. And it was for the sake of this hidden Hell within that our Blessed Lord said when on earth, and says now to every soul, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

For as the soul is become this self-tormenting fire only because the birth of the Son of God was extinguished in it by our first parents, so there is no other possible remedy for it, either in Heaven or earth, but by its coming to this Son of God, to be born again of Him.

Now, as the soul, by the losing of the birth of the Son of God in it, is become an aching dark root of fire that has this restless Selfishness, restless Envy, restless Pride, and restless Wrath in it, which are the four elements of Hell; so by its being in these or having them in it, it is come to pass that evil spirits have such communion with it and so great power over it. Every stirring of the soul in the element of Pride is a moving in the Devil's Element, where he is and has power to join and act with it: every motion in the element of Envy or Wrath is so far empowering him to enter into the breath of our life and settle his fiery Kingdom in us.

### (iii.) *Repentance.*

A plausible form of an outward life that has only learned rules and modes of Religion by Use and Custom, often keeps the soul for some time at ease, though all its inward root and ground of sin has never been shaken

or molested, though it has never tasted of the bitters of Repentance and has only known the want of a Saviour by *hearsay*.

But things cannot pass thus: sooner or later Repentance must have a broken and a contrite heart; we must with our Blessed Lord go over the Brook Cedron and with Him sweat great drops of sorrow before He can say for us, as He said for Himself, "It is finished."

Now, though this sensibility of the sinfulness of our inward ground is not to be expected to be the same in all, yet the Truth and Reality of it must, and will be, in all that do but give way to the discovery of it; and our sinfulness would ever be in our sight, if we did not industriously turn our eyes from it. If we used but half the pains to find out the evil that is hidden in us, as we do to hide the appearance of it from others, we should soon find that in the midst of our most orderly life we are in death and want a Saviour to make our most apparent virtues to be virtuous.

It is therefore exceedingly good and beneficial to us to discover this dark disordered fire of our soul; because when rightly known, and rightly dealt with, it can as well be made the foundation of Heaven as it is of Hell.

For when the Fire and Strength of the soul is sprinkled with the Blood of the Lamb, then its Fire becomes a Fire of Light, and its Strength is changed into a Strength of triumphing Love, and will be fitted to have a place among those Flames of Love that wait about the Throne of God.

(iv.) *Faith.*

The reason why we know so little of Jesus Christ as our Saviour, Atonement and Justification, why we are so destitute of that faith in Him, which alone can change, rectify, and redeem our souls, why we live starving in the coldness and deadness of a formal, historical *hearsay Religion* is this: we are strangers to our own misery and wants, we know not that we lie in the jaws of Death and Hell; we keep all things quiet



within us, partly by outward forms and modes of Religion and Morality, and partly by the comforts, cares, and delights of this world. Hence it is that we consent to receive a Saviour as we consent to admit of the four Gospels, because only four are received by the Church. We believe in a Saviour, not because we feel an absolute want of one, but because we have been told there is one, and that it would be a rebellion against God to reject Him. We believe in Christ as our Atonement, just as we believe that He cast seven devils out of Mary Magdalene, and so are no more helped, delivered, and justified by believing that He is our Atonement than by believing that He cured Mary Magdalene.

True faith is a coming to Jesus Christ to be saved, and delivered from a sinful Nature, as the Canaanitish woman came to Him and would not be denied. It is a Faith of Love, a Faith of Hunger, a Faith of Thirst, a Faith of Certainty and firm Assurance, that in love and longing and hunger and thirst and full assurance will lay hold on Christ as its loving assured certain and infallible Saviour and Atonement.

It is this Faith that breaks off all the Bars and Chains of Death and Hell in the soul; it is to this Faith that Christ always says what He said in the Gospel, "Thy Faith hath saved thee, thy sins are forgiven thee; go in peace." Nothing can be denied to this Faith; all things are possible to it; and he that thus seeks Christ must find Him to be his Salvation.

#### (v.) *Christ our Salvation.*

Now as this Hell, Serpent, Worm, and Death are all within us rising up in the forms and essences of our fallen soul, so our Redeemer, or Regenerator, whatever it be, must be also equally within us, and spring up from as great a depth in our Nature. Now the Scripture sufficiently tells us that it is only the promised seed of the woman, the eternal Word, or Son of God made Man, that can bruise this head or kill this life of the Serpent



in us; therefore this Seed of the Woman must have its dwelling in the ground and essence of our Nature, because the Serpent is there, that a new Life of a new Nature may arise from this Seed within us; and therefore it is plain that Regeneration or the New Birth is, and can be no other thing, but the recovering of the birth of the Son of God in the fallen soul. And this is what the Scripture means by the necessity of our being born of God, born again from above, born of the Spirit.

What is it that any thoughtful serious man could wish for, but to have a new heart and a new spirit free from the self-tormenting elements of Selfishness, Envy, Pride, and Wrath? His own experience has shown him that nothing human can do this for him; can take away the root of evil that is in him; and it is so natural to him to think that God alone can do it, that he has often been tempted to accuse God for suffering it to be so with him.

Therefore to have the Son of God come from Heaven to redeem him by a birth of His own Divine Nature in him must be a way of salvation highly suited to his own sense, wants, and experience; because he finds that his evil lies deep in the very essence and form of his Nature and therefore can only be removed by the arising of a New Birth or Life in the first essences of it.

Therefore an inward Saviour, a Saviour that is God Himself raising his own Divine Birth in the fallen soul, has such an agreeable fitness in it to do for him all that he wants as must make every sober man with open arms ready and willing to receive such a Salvation.

#### vi.) *The Love of God.*

Some people have an idea or notion of the Christian Religion as if God was thereby declared so full of Wrath against fallen man that nothing but the blood of His only-begotten Son could satisfy His vengeance. Nay, some have gone such lengths of wickedness as to assert that God had by immutable decrees reprobated and

rejected a great part of the race of Adam to an inevitable Damnation, to show forth and magnify the Glory of His Justice.

But these are miserable Mistakers of the Divine Nature and miserable Reproachers of His great love and goodness in the Christian Dispensation.

For God is Love, all Love, and so all Love that nothing but Love can come from Him: and the Christian Religion is nothing else but an open full Manifestation of His universal Love towards all Mankind.

As the light of the Sun has only one common Nature towards all objects that receive it, so God has only one common Nature of Goodness towards all created Nature breaking forth in infinite Flames of Love upon every part of the Creation, and calling everything to the Highest Happiness it is capable of.

God so loved Man when his fall was foreseen that He chose him to salvation in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the World. When Man was actually fallen, God was so without all Wrath towards him, so full of Love for him, that He sent His only-begotten Son into the World to redeem him. Therefore God has no Nature towards him but Love, and all that He does to man is Love. There is no Wrath that stands between God and us, but what is awakened in the dark Fire of our own fallen Nature; and to quench this Wrath and not His own, God gave His only-begotten Son to be made Man.

All mankind may in a certain and good sense be said to be in some degree sharers of this regeneration, as having in them a Seed of Life that is contrary to their corrupt nature; which seed they partake of as heirs of the first grace granted to Adam in the ingrafted Word, the Light of Life which lighteth every man that cometh into the World. . . . All Christians are in a higher and further state of regeneration by the Grace of Baptism into the Name of the Holy Trinity. By Baptism they profess themselves disciples of Jesus Christ in His King-

dom of Grace to seek for Life, Righteousness, and Sanctification in Him; to live by His Spirit in conformity to His Doctrine, Life, Sufferings, and Death, in a continual resistance of the corruptions of their nature, the temptations of the World and the Devil. This profession faithfully kept is their progress in the Way of Regeneration.

### III. THE INCARNATION

#### I. THE WORD OF GOD.

When we consider man we see that each one of us has a threefold activity of thought, word, and deed. We may, if we choose, abstain from human intercourse, refuse to reveal or unveil ourselves: shut ourselves up within ourselves: a mere tumult of thoughts and feelings which find no expression. But if we wish to hold communion with others our thought must become incarnate in a word. The spoken word uses the atmosphere with its vibrations as the medium which gives it a body, a definite form which conveys our thought to the mind of another through the ear. The written word uses ink and paper, and appeals to the eye. Your word is a part of yourself. It has something of yourself in it; but once uttered it has an independent existence of its own. It has gone beyond your control. You cannot recall it. You may immediately send out another word to counteract the first if that be possible. But each word is a centre of spiritual activity, revealing something of yourself, and stimulating, consoling, irritating or soothing the minds of others.

But words may represent only some passing mood of your personality, and not your true self. They are symbols which may misrepresent you and mislead others. Falsehood as well as Truth become incarnate in words. A further and more reliable revelation or self-expression can be found when thought and feeling are not only incarnate in word but also in deed. Deeds generally

cost more than words, more exertion, more suffering, more courage. Words are conventional symbols only understood by those who know the language and changing their meaning and value in the course of time and in different countries: but deeds are to some extent common to the race. Men of every nation can appreciate just or courageous actions and kind and unselfish deeds. We learn the character of another man more fully by watching his actions than by listening to his words.

If God had been content to speak to us only by the Prophets, we could never have known His love. For words cost nothing and often mislead. So a further and final revelation of the Character of God is given to us when God "hath spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the effulgence of His glory, and the very image of His substance, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb. i. 2).

## 2. THE HUMANITY OF GOD.

There is a human element in God from all eternity; and this human element had been imperfectly reflected in created form in the sons of Men. The "truly human" is the Humanity of God. The "merely human" is the humanity of Man. This Archetypal man in the very being of God is the image of God in which we were created.

A ray of light is in the Sun before it issues forth, and clothes itself in our atmosphere, the crimson glory of the sunrise, and is reflected in the dewdrop, and penetrates all that lives with invigorating force.

When, therefore, God became man, the Humanity He exhibited was not a created humanity such as ours is, but the truly human such as God alone possesses, and in the likeness of which we are made. God's Humanity revealed in Christ is the unveiling before our

eyes of that of which we are the created copies. We are made in His image in order that we may grow into His likeness. Man without Christ is sub-human. He only becomes truly human when in union with God he is a partaker of the divine nature. (See Dr Relton, *A Study in Christology*.)

### 3. THE VIRGIN BIRTH.

It is the work of the Holy Spirit to make this perfect Humanity of God "at one" with the humanity of man by His overshadowing of the Virgin Mary, from whose womb is drawn the material of our earthly human nature. This is the first great step in the majestic process of the Atonement.

The Holy Spirit's work does not end in this great act wrought out on the plane of History, this union of God and Man in Christ. Each one of us must be born again of water and the Spirit in Holy Baptism, so that our humanity may be incorporated into the Divine Humanity of Christ, and we may live in Him and He in us. The Virgin Birth is not only a fact once and for ever accomplished at a certain point in Time and Space at Bethlehem. It is also a process for ever taking place, a supernatural virgin birth in each individual soul, when by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit brooding over the waters of the Baptismal Font each soul is regenerate or born again into the very life of Christ, and becomes a new creation. This is a pure Act of God's grace, the free gift of God's own life, our imperfect humanity incorporated into the Humanity of God in Christ. It is birth from above, and not merely an evolution from within.

We may respond to this gift by faith, or we may fail to respond. If we respond the Christ life within us quickens and empowers every energy of our personality, illuminating our mind, strengthening our will, and kindling our heart. But while the energising of this divine bestowal is dependent on our response, no effort of ours can win or deserve the Gift.

## 4. THE METHOD OF OUR REDEMPTION.

(i.) *Supernatural.*

“That which is born of the flesh is flesh. That which is born of the Spirit is Spirit” (St. John iii. 6). Christianity is essentially supernatural. Redemption is wrought for man not by Revolution—turning things upside down; nor by Reformation—the cleansing and patching up of the old sinful fallen nature, but by Recreation—the bestowal of a new nature: and this Recreation is accomplished by Regeneration: we must be born again. As far as the Church is concerned, this new birth into the new Fellowship of the twice-born sons of God is initiated at Holy Baptism when we are born again of water and the Spirit. But every time we quench the Spirit within us (1 Thess. v. 19), whenever by mortal sin we separate ourselves from God and the supernatural life dies out of our soul, we need a new birth in the Spirit.

The life in the Flesh, the worldly life, the life of which one's isolated self is the centre, is a life lived in two dimensions. It is a life lived between your neighbour and yourself between the cradle and the grave, in Time and Space.

The life lived in the Spirit, the Christian life, is life lived in three dimensions—God, neighbour, and self; Time, Space, and Eternity; the Father, the Brotherhood, and the Son; the King, the Kingdom, and the Citizen.

The natural or worldly life, life in two dimensions, is not totally corrupt, but fatally inadequate. It is sub-human and on the level of the animals, and can never fully satisfy the immortal spirit. “Every one that drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life” (St. John iv. 13).

The life that has its centre in the world is a dying life: the life that has its centre in self is a living death.



All the lusts, desire, hopes, and vainglory of the world turn to dust and ashes. All the love, ambition, pride, and vanity which is centred upon the isolated self turn to worms and corruption. The root of all sin is selfishness. If we separate ourselves from God, the Fountain of Love, our self becomes isolated and all the activities of our personality turn inward, and feed upon the self. Hell is selfishness consummated. Heaven is fellowship realised. A soul is integrated, made into a unity, when all its powers move outward in love for another. A soul disintegrates and perishes when it has no object beyond itself. Selfishness inevitably in the end disintegrates the ego. It is the suicide of the soul. It can only be saved by a new birth of the life of God within it. When by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit Christ is born in the soul and the heart becomes a Bethlehem, then all the powers of body, mind, and spirit, *i.e.*, the Shepherds, the Wise Men, and our Lady and the Holy Angels, unite in the love and worship of the Son of God, and the soul is saved as it loves God with all its heart and mind and soul and strength. Our redemption is Supernatural.

(ii.) *Co-operative.*

Our Redemption is Supernatural. It is wrought by God. Its essence is the birth of the life of God within us. We can do nothing to deserve it or obtain it. It is His free gift to us of His only-begotten Son. But it is also co-operative. God does not wish to pauperise His children. He does not wish to degrade them into helpless recipients of charity. When He desired love from His creatures He of necessity gave them Freewill, for that is not love which cannot be freely given or withheld. As in creation, so in redemption. We can only be redeemed by learning to love God more than we love sin. God cannot force any man to be saved. He, and He alone, can provide the means of salvation: Man, and Man alone, can make the response.



So God respects the personality He has created and the freedom He has bestowed, and asks us to co operate in our own redemption. He does not attempt to save us by some soul-shattering marvel in the skies, nor by sending an Angel to become Incarnate for us. He comes Himself in the Person of His Son, and He asks us to give Him of our best. So humanity offers our Lady, the flower of the evolution of the human race; she stands upon the pinnacle of history, stretching out the arms of supplication to God, and God takes our human nature from her womb, so that He may really belong to us as we do to Him. He could have created a special superior kind of humanity which would have been alien to ours; but He did not. He asked us to co operate with Him in the work of our redemption, to give Him our best, and He would do the rest. In taking upon Himself our nature, He drew the very material of His manhood from our Lady's womb; He hung helpless upon her breast, in order that He might educate and develop the instinct of service, and all the best and most tender feelings of our nature. Redemption comes from above: it works from within. The overshadowing of the Holy Spirit which brings the Christ to birth in our hearts adds no new faculties to our nature. It quickens what is dead, kindles what is cold, and illuminates what is dark; just as fire adds no new element to metal, but heightens the vibration of every particle until the whole glows with light and radiates heat.

One of the most noble works of the Church Army is the care of discharged convicts, who are not herded in an institution, but placed out in cottage homes, where the loving care of foster father and mother can restore their self-respect and develop their interests and personality. Prebendary Carlile records how in one of these homes a poor fellow was being cared for who was at times possessed by an evil spirit of wrath and anger. For weeks he would be kind and courteous, and most pleasant in the home. Then something would upset

him, and his temper would rise, and his whole face would become transfigured with wrath until, as he lost all self-control, his hosts feared for their lives. The father and mother were on the point of abandoning him as hopeless because of these frequent outbreaks, when one day, as this convict was scrubbing the kitchen floor, the mother noticed that his gaze was frequently turned to her little baby which lay in its cradle by the fire. A happy inspiration came to her and she asked him, "Would you like to nurse my baby for me?" He eagerly asked to be allowed to do so; and so each day for a blissful hour he would walk up and down, crowing and crooning to the baby in his arms. When after this the dread signs warned them that another outburst was approaching, the mother used to say, "Oh! don't lose your temper, or I shall be afraid to trust you with my baby." At once the fires of wrath were quenched and the storm of passion passed away. The baby was a point outside himself round which his starved and stunted affections, his love and loyalty, could centre with a passion of devotion which unified his whole being into a harmony of peace, strengthened his will, kindled his heart, illuminated his mind.

So, on Christmas Day, God, looking down in pity on passion-tossed humanity, entrusts the Child of Bethlehem to the keeping of the Human Race. He becomes the centre of love for Mankind, and wherever the love of Jesus is there the heart of man is changed. He saves us not by bestowing patronage, but by evoking sympathy. He does not say "I come because you need me," but "I come because I need you," and thus He makes us fellow-workers with God in the work of our own redemption.

### (iii.) *Unitive.*

As the Holy Spirit is the bond between the Father and the Son, so everywhere and always His work is to unify, to make "at one," to harmonise. At the

Incarnation He makes God and Man "at one," as our human nature is taken into union with the Person of the Son of God, "not by the conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by the taking of the Manhood into God, One altogether not by confusion of Substance, but by unity of Person."

So, again, when He broods over the heart of man, that Christ may be born within him, He unifies that person's nature. Sin brings discord into the heart of man, so that the conscience, the passions, the body, soul, and spirit, the heart and mind and will are in conflict, seeking mutually destructive ends. "For the good which I would I do not; but the evil which I would not that I practise. . . . I find then the law that to me who would do good evil is present. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin, which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me out of the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For the mind of the flesh is death; but the mind of the Spirit is life and peace" (Rom. vii. 19; and viii. 5).

This is the age-long conflict of the human race, which part of his complex nature shall be dominant? Shall the beast within him tear to pieces the God who has made his heart His home? Or shall the God within him subdue and reign over the beast? In this conflict the Holy Spirit strengthens us for victory and peace, and makes us "more than conquerors through Him that loved us" (Rom. viii. 37).

## IV. OUR LORD'S BAPTISM

(St. Matt. iii. 13-17; St. Mark i. 9-11; St. Luke iii. 21-22.)

## I. THE SACRAMENTAL PRINCIPLE.

Two aspects of the Sacramental interpretation of the Universe are illustrated in this event : (1) That every outward appearance is a symbol of an inward reality. The Material Universe is "the Body of God," in the phrase of St. Athanasius. God is in the water as well as in the mind. St. John's Baptism was an outward symbol of a changed mind, a symbol which did not convey grace. "I indeed baptise you with water unto repentance: but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: He shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost and with fire" (St. Matt. iii. 11). Our Lord has made Himself one with our sinful race, and so determines to fulfil all righteousness, to accept all the limitations which that solidarity involves. "I come not to destroy, but to fulfil" (*i.e.*, to fill full) (St. Matt. v. 17). He takes the Baptism of John and fills it full of living and life-giving power by making the water, not only a sign, but an effectual sign—a sign which effects what it symbolises, the cleansing of the soul by the new birth in the Holy Spirit. In our Baptismal service we pray, "Almighty and everlasting God, who . . . by the Baptism of Thy wellbeloved Son Jesus Christ in the river Jordan, didst sanctify water to the mystical washing away of sin. . . ."

(2) Secondly, Sacraments have a social aspect. Their virtue and meaning is not exhausted in the conveying of grace to the soul. They serve also as a public witness to all who see them administered that the recipient has been admitted to the Fellowship of the Holy Catholic Church, the Brotherhood of the Baptised.

## 2. A SPURIOUS SPIRITUALITY.

There is a spurious spirituality which can only recognise as spiritual the interior movements of the heart and mind and will; and despises Sacraments as "carnal ordinances." This condemns the soul to perpetual isolation from other souls, and is miserably individualistic. For if the soul wishes to communicate its thought or feeling to other souls, of necessity it must use the medium of the material Universe. The spoken word is merely a combination of vibrations of the atmosphere which produce a sound when they make contact with the material ear of another person, who has learned to recognise certain sounds as the symbols for certain things—*e.g.*, the sound "table" for a slab of wood resting on four upright pieces of wood. The written word is merely a symbolical arrangement of black and white which, when the vibrations of light make contact with another person's material eye, convey, by conventional agreement, a certain meaning to the mind. So those very persons who imagine that they are more spiritual because they have no carnal ordinances such as Sacraments are inevitably using material symbols and Sacramental means in conveying their protest. The spirituality which fails to sanctify the material Universe by the use of sacraments is a spurious and debased spirituality. God in the beauty of form and colour and sound makes the material Universe the vehicle of the spiritual, and thus sanctifies it to the fulfilment of His will.

## 3. THE CONSECRATION TO HIS MISSION.

Our Lord in His life on earth as the Son of Man always moved under the pressure of the Father's Will. He did not wish to originate anything, but only to wait on and respond to His Father's Will. He had come to win our battle as we must win it, in the exercise of those powers which He has in common with us. Man is everywhere and always a response. The lungs do

not create the air; they respond to it. The eye does not create the light; it responds to it. The mind does not create the Truth; it responds to it. And the heart does not create its God; it responds to Him. This is the very essence of true Sonship—Dependence upon the Father in all things. The only thing man originates is Sin.

So our Lord in all His thoughts, and words, and deeds, His plans, time, and movements, proclaims His dependence on the Father: and we may reverently imagine the interior impulse which led Him after thirty years of peaceful obscurity with His mother at Nazareth to bid her farewell and issue forth upon His public ministry. The Visions which came to Him as a boy in the Temple had now matured into the conviction of His Messiahship, and the predestined hour had come when He must manifest Himself and fling down His challenge to the world.

Let us pray for this calm spirit of dependence. It is the secret of peace. How often is the coming of the Kingdom hindered and the work of the Church ruined by our impatience, and our eagerness to work and speak in our own strength, and to do things in our own self-chosen time: premature or immature; too soon, or too weak. Or perhaps the opposite extreme is our failure, to be dilatory, to procrastinate, to shrink from action when we know that the hour has come. It was said of our Government's action halfway through the Great War, that its measures were "everywhere and always too little and too late." May not the same be said of our apathy to the Mission work of the Church, "everywhere and always too little and too late"?

#### 4. THE OPEN HEAVENS.

"The Heavens were opened unto Him." The Vision of the opened Heavens, the descending Dove, and the Father's approving Voice "were not a proclamation to the Nation, but a personal revelation. The Baptism marks the point of complete apprehension by the Lord's human mind of the fulness of all that He was, and the



function which it was His to fill in the divinely ordered life of the world." In contrast with the open Heavens we may place the modern mechanical conception of the Universe as a "closed in" system in which a given quantity of energy ceaselessly and for ever weaves itself into innumerable ever-changing forms, in the endless monotony of the birth and death of worlds, without even the possibility of guidance, influence, or interference from outside. This mechanical "closed in" system is a purely speculative hypothesis, incapable of proof, and contradicted by the whole Christian experience. The Christian life is a life lived in the conscious presence of God, and in the companionship of Christ who has opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers. The living vital spring of all our motives and of all our actions is at a point in the Heavenly places where our life is hid with Christ in God. Here on earth we are no more strangers and sojourners, homeless and wandering round and round in a closed-in magic circle of birth and death from which there is no escape. We are pilgrims who move beneath the open heavens of our Father's Presence and with Christ as our Companion and the Holy Spirit as our Guide toward that City which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God, where Christ has prepared a place for us that where He is we may be also. Often the earth-born clouds of passion and sin and lust obscure the Heavens from our view, but we know that they are there and that a true repentance can dissipate the clouds and open to us again the Heavenly Vision. The real, the abiding, the absolute values of life are in the Heavenlies—the Ideal is the only home of the Real. All on earth is appearance, ever changing, never abiding, transitory, deceptive, confined to Space and Time. In the Holy Eucharist every barrier of Time and Space fades away, and the Heavens are open as we join with Angels and Archangels and all the Company of Heaven in the adoration of God and of the Lamb. Let us see that we do not become earthbound; let us pray that with St. Paul we



may say as our life on earth nears its end, "I was not disobedient to the Heavenly Vision."

### 5. THE DESCENDING DOVE.

The Holy Spirit, by Whom the Sacred Humanity of our Lord was conceived, working upon it through all the years of growth and immaturity, had at length brought it to the fulness of its powers. And now He descends to abide with our Lord without measure and to be to Him all that He is to us. "Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan, and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness during forty days, being tempted of the devil. . . ." "And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee. . . . And He opened the book and found the place where it is written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me" (St. Luke iv. 1, 14, 18).

Our Lord lived our life, conquered our temptations, bore our sufferings, loved and lived and died as we do, not by the exercise of His powers as the Son of God, but by the very same power which He has bestowed on us—the power of the Holy Spirit, possessing, illuminating, strengthening all the faculties and functions of His human nature. If it were not so He would have been no example and encouragement to us: we should have gazed in wonder at His perfection, and have said, "Of course God can conquer evil and do all things: but I cannot." So our Lord gave Himself up entirely to the possession of the Spirit, was "full of the Spirit," "led by the Spirit," "returned in the power of the Spirit," and preached as the Spirit of the Lord was upon Him. Are we trying thus to surrender ourselves so that we too may be filled, led, and empowered by the Spirit?

### 6. THE APPROVING VOICE.

Our Lord, who was in all points tempted or tried as we are, must have suffered from a great shrinking from the work when He first fully realised His Messiahship. The awful responsibility of standing alone for God against the world; the apparent hopelessness of facing a corrupt Church, petrified with ceremonial formalism,

dead to all the true values, human and divine, of real religion; the immensity of the task of awakening a decadent nation, cowering under the oppression of a foreign rule; the loneliness of one whose youth and early manhood had been spent in a cottage home in an obscure village, and now realised that the redemption of the world had been laid upon Him and entrusted to Him: thoughts such as these may have weighed heavily on the human mind of our Lord. What a relief it must have been to hear in His heart His Father's voice proclaiming, "Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleased."

It is the divine sanction for encouragement and sympathy. Sometimes we are more ready to express our adverse criticisms and to be censorious, than to appreciate one another's virtues and offer encouragement. And yet, in England especially, most men fail in a life of virtue, not because they love evil, but because they have tried to do right, have failed and are discouraged. Often a wife's faith in her husband will not merely develop what capacities he has, but also create most unexpected powers, so that as the phrase goes "he surpasses himself." A genuine belief in the Holy Spirit as the "Power from on High," and the calm peace of God's assured approval, will enable us to enter on some overwhelming task, or some great adventure, with a confidence of ultimate victory, which makes that victory so much the more assured. We, too, if we are led by the Spirit, must follow our Lord into the wilderness to be tempted by the Devil.

## V. THE HOLY SACRIFICE

We are told in the Epistle to the Hebrews (chap. ix. 14) that it was through the Eternal Spirit that Christ offered Himself "without spot unto God." So we may meditate upon our Lord's life and ministry as the way in which the Spirit guided Him in offering His sacrifice to God.

### I. THE IDEA OF SACRIFICE.

It has been a serious disaster to the religious life that the true idea of sacrifice has been obscured or lost

in its full development by the exaggerated emphasis laid on one aspect of this offering.

A sacrifice is an outward symbol of an inward disposition. The inward disposition is to the outward symbol as the soul is to the body, or the intention is to an act. The word "sacrifice" comes from two Latin words, *sacrum* and *facere*, "to make sacred," "to consecrate," "to set apart for God." This idea has been obscured by the excessive emphasis laid on one class of sacrifices which involved death—which was first associated with the appeasing of a wrathful God, and then in the Jewish dispensation, with bearing the penalty of sin, and lastly with the destruction of the dedicated thing, so that it might not be used again for secular purposes. But death is not of the essence of sacrifice: it enters in only as the penalty of sin and as the final test of the entirety of the obedience. The idea of sacrifice is entire consecration to God. The essence of sacrifice is obedience; the symbol of sacrifice is not the sword that slays, but the flame that kindles; and the motive of sacrifice is love.

## 2. THE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST.

From these considerations we shall understand that the sacrifice of Christ was not the death that He died, but the life that He lived. Every conscious moment of His life on earth He offered Himself in perfect response to the Father's will. "To do the Will of Him that sent Me" was the single motive of His life. It was the consecration of His boyhood: "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" It was the purpose of His coming: "I came down from Heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me." It was His support in labour, as it may be ours: "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me and to finish His work." It was His victory in temptation as it will be ours: "Father, if it be Thy will, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not My will, but Thine be done." And it was His triumph on the Cross to present

to adversity a will which would not yield. Men might break His heart, but they could not bend His will. The Sacrifice of Obedience was perfected. He became "obedient even unto death, yea the death of the Cross" (Phil. ii. 8). The witness had been borne, and He had been "faithful unto death." The work which He came to do was fulfilled, and He could raise the triumphant cry of victory, "It is finished." "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit," and through the mystery of the Resurrection and Ascension He could enter into the joy set before Him of a world redeemed for which He "endured the Cross, despising the shame" (Heb. xii. 2).

Now the sacrifice of Christ was to present to the Father a perfect Human Nature, at every moment entirely consecrated to the Father's will; a Body unstained by sin; a Mind unclouded by doubt; a Heart unswerving in its devotion; a Will unshaken in its loyalty. And this sacrifice was offered in the power of the Holy Spirit, in that same power which is yours and mine, "Who through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God" (Heb. ix. 14).

The sacrifice of Christ opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers; and at the same time opened the heart of humanity to the inflowing and indwelling of the Holy Spirit. For all who are incorporated by Baptism into that Divine Humanity, the obstacle of sin is removed, and the Spirit can flow in and take possession. The motive and meaning of the Christian life is to reproduce the sacrifice of Christ in our own life of entire consecration, to offer ourselves up moment by moment and day by day in entire self-surrender and joyful co-operation with the Heart and Mind and Will of God. And as we offer ourselves, body, soul, and spirit, heart and mind and will, thought and word and deed to the Father, we here and now enter on the Eternal Life, which is uplifted above the power of death—a life "full of the Spirit," led by the Spirit, and lived in the power of the Spirit.

## PART III

### THE SPIRIT OF POWER

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#### I. THE SPIRIT OF POWER

##### I. OUR LORD'S FINAL INSTRUCTIONS.

*Read* : Acts i. 1-8.

*Picture.*—On the slopes of Mount Olivet. The Risen Lord, surrounded by the Apostles, whom He had met once more in the Upper Chamber, led them out of the City across Cedron to the Mount of Olives, as seven weeks before He had led them by the same path to Gethsemane. He gives them His final instructions, and then is parted from them as He passes into the Unseen World.

*Point 1* : “ *After that He had given commandment through the Holy Spirit.*”

His Sacred Humanity, even in His Risen Life, is still full of the Spirit and empowered by the Spirit.

*Point 2* : “ *Speaking the things concerning the Kingdom of God.*”

The Kingdom of God and its realisation on earth is still the one dominant concern of the Sacred Heart. As in His utterances recorded in the Gospels He spake of it ninety-nine times, so now after His Resurrection it absorbs His interest.

*Point 3* : “ *Wait for the promise of the Father.*”

The Kingdom is not to be “ born of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” The old conception of election by physical birth, by racial affinity, is to be superseded. The National Church of the Jews was to become the Catholic Church ;

its doors thrown open to the entrance of the whole human race; the election was to be by the supernatural birth of the Spirit overshadowing the faithful heart. It must not be born merely of human skill or desire, nor must it be a merely human creation made by the will of man. The Church is to be a Divine and Heavenly Fellowship, born of a Virgin birth from the creative power of the Holy Spirit: "Ye shall be baptised with the Holy Spirit not many days hence."

*Point 4: "It is not for you to know the times and seasons which the Father has set in His own authority."*

The tendency of human nature is to be impatient, and to hurry onward to the fulfilment of what it desires to see accomplished. This is natural. Each man has only about seventy years of creative activity in which to influence the course of events. The Apostles had even at this point not fully grasped our Lord's plan for the Kingdom. They still thought in terms of Jewish patriots who desired and expected to see the Kingdom of God as an Imperial Judaism, just as some narrow-minded Britons think of it as a universal British Empire. They had yet to learn to think in terms of Humanity instead of in terms of Nationality. This was the sin of Judas, who was impatient with our Lord because He would not become a mere National King and deliver the chosen race from the Roman yoke. There was also the peril of impulsiveness in such characters as Peter, who wanted to get things done here and now. So when they asked, "Lord, dost thou at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?" He said unto them, "It is not for you to know the times and seasons which the Father hath set within His own authority."

The same tendency is manifested today, as throughout the course of Church History—the tendency to hurry and to attempt to force the divine event. Some urgency is pardonable, because it is necessary to correct man's sloth and habit of procrastination. So we hear the urgent cry, "The evangelisation of the world in this



generation." So we note the frequent attempt to reunite the shattered fragments of Christendom by easy methods of compromise, instead of by the long and weary path of penitence, which requires the elimination of pride and self-assertion and the gradual growth of one heart and one mind. Until Papal pride and Protestant self-assertion and Anglican complacency are rooted out of our hearts, there cannot be the one heart and mind which alone can make the Church a real unity.

*Point 5: "But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you; and ye shall be my witnesses . . . unto the uttermost part of the earth."*

The Greek word for "power" in this passage is *dunamis*, and the word for "witness" is *martur*, which, as we use them in English, have become "dynamite" and "martyr."

(i.) *Power* (*dunamis*, dynamite). On its way down the ages the first vigour and energy of the Christian Faith has been lost and modified and tamed. The Faith which turned the world upside down has been robbed of its force and tamed to bless what God has cursed—an anti-Christian civilisation. This deterioration of Christian values can be noted in the changed meaning of its characteristic words. "Meekness" is now often confused with "weakness." But the meekness of our Lord was the restraint of strength, while weakness is the lack of strength. "Sacrifice" was originally "to make holy"—to give something to God, entire consecration. Today the sacrifice has an almost universal negative significance, and generally means the reluctant surrender of something we want to keep, when it should mean the joyful consecration of all we have and all we are.

"Comforter" originally means "one who strengthens," and so in a secondary sense helps us to bear our sorrows. But now this word has almost universally come to mean "a consoler," one who comforts us with a soothing sympathy. So the Holy Spirit is too often represented



as a soft and gentle influence, whose chief function is to console the grief-stricken—a comforter.

“ And His that gentle voice we hear,  
Soft as the breath of even,  
Which checks each fault and calms each fear  
And speaks of Heaven.”

This is, indeed, one of His most gracious functions, for which we may fervently thank God. But it is not His chief activity. He comes to strengthen us with a force which will overturn kingdoms and make the Christian warrior unconquerable in the power to endure, untameable in the flame of his enthusiasm, triumphant in the virtue of a power which is not his own—the Power from on high. The meaning “consoler” may reduce our Christianity to a drug which soothes the soul to endure the evils of the world, and makes no effort to remedy them—a soporific which deadens the sensitiveness of the soul, and leads it to acquiesce in evils against which it should protest; so that the enemies of our Faith have some ground for saying that “religion is the opium for the people.” But it was said of the first Christians that they were dangerous revolutionaries who “have turned the world upside down” (Acts xvii. 6), and a right interpretation of the word “comforter” as “one who strengthens” would place Christians in the forefront of the battle against the godless materialism of our present-day civilisation with its gross worship of money, its greed, its wars, and its lusts. This is the force, the power, the dynamite, which our Lord promised to the Apostles, and which swiftly dissolved the godless civilisation which surrounded them.

(ii.) “*Witness*” does not mean merely an onlooker who truthfully records what he sees. The Greek word is “martyr,” and this soon came to mean one who will seal his witness with his blood, who will face death rather than be silent in witnessing to Jesus Christ and His Resurrection and proclaiming Him Lord of all. This word “witness” is of supreme importance, as

defining the duty of the first Apostles and of all Christians for all time. We have to witness for God by example and protest. God does not demand that we shall succeed in anything He gives us to do. Success may be beyond our power. We may be overwhelmed and crushed beneath the powers of evil. But our failure cannot be more complete than, in outward seeming, the failure of our Lord on Calvary when His earthly life closed amidst the disastrous collapse of everything for which he had striven—betrayed by one, denied by another and deserted by all the Apostles whom He had trained, cast away and cursed by the people He had come to save. God does not demand success: what He demands is faithful witness.

## II. THE ASCENSION (Acts i. 9-11).

### 1. "HE WAS TAKEN UP."

Some foolish and vulgar things have been said of the Ascension by some Modernist writers, who lack the reverence and restraint of St. Luke, and mock at what they do not understand.

In the Mystic sphere there is, of course, no up or down, no here or there, no now or then. But in the Historical sphere our knowledge is "processional": it has the limitations of Time and Space; each event is before or after another, and the terms of up and down, here and there, now and then, are inevitable and relative, as when these same writers tell their children that they are going upstairs, or coming down, without explaining that there is no up or down. So no other words can better record the passing of our Lord into the unseen world than this expression of St. Luke.

### 2. "A CLOUD RECEIVED HIM OUT OF THEIR SIGHT."

In the Old Testament the incomprehensibleness of the divine nature was typified by a cloud which hid Jehovah from human view; so now the human body

of Jesus is concealed by the same cloud, which is the cloud of the Shekinah, or divine glory. He is now "in glory."

Some have thought that the cloud was a cloud of Angels, for the holy Angels loved to minister to our Lord's Humanity. The Angel Gabriel announced His Incarnation. Angels sang upon the Hills of Bethlehem when He was born in human form (St. Luke ii. 13). They "ministered unto Him" in the wilderness of Temptation (St. Matt. iv. 11). An Angel came to Him in the Garden of Gethsemane (St. Luke xxii. 43). Angels watched over His body as it lay in the Tomb (St. John xx. 12). They asked them, "Why seek ye the living among the dead?" (St. Luke xxiv. 5). So now they bid the Apostles to expect Jesus to "come in like manner as ye beheld Him going into Heaven." We know that they will accompany Him when He returns, "when the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the Angels with Him" (St. Matt. xxv. 31).

### 3. THE DESTINY OF MAN.

The Ascension reveals to us the destiny of man. For our Lord bore up to Heaven something which He brought not down, our Human Nature. This is the crown of the age-long process of evolution. If all this upward movement of life from the rock to the brain and heart of man, this process which has culminated in the faith and hope and love, in deeds of self-sacrifice and chivalry and heroism, in the good, the beautiful, and the true, in the godlike splendour of men and women who love liberty more than life and fear dishonour more than death—if all this majestic process were merely to end in dust and worms, then the French philosopher would be right who said that if this were the end he would regard life as a joke in very bad taste on the part of the Creator.

But the Ascension reveals the destiny of man, and the crown of the process of evolution. That life which

issued forth from the Heart of God, and has woven itself into innumerable forms, and passed through manifold disciplines, is destined to return to God enriched with its experiences, its sorrows transfigured into joy, its wounds glowing with radiant splendour, the pure flame of love in its heart presenting to God a true image of Himself.

#### 4. THE SYMPATHY OF GOD.

The Unity of God is a sublime truth which is held in common by Jew, Christian, and Mohammedan, and accounts for much that is noble in their lives. But a God who had not become Incarnate, who was content to sit coldly sublime among the stars, wrapt in the solitude of an eternal isolation, looking down from a distance on the sufferings of the human race, might inspire us with awe, but He could scarcely win our love.

The Christian, as he gazes at our Lord ascending to Heaven, knows that now at the centre of Reality, in the Heart of God there is a human Heart which throbs with our pain, a human Will which has felt the strain of our temptations and knows how to help, a Human Body which has known what it is to labour and be weary. It is to be noted that our Lord did not ascend to Heaven from Mount Hermon, the Mount of Transfiguration, but from Mount Olivet, where is Gethsemane, the Garden of the Agony. We are nearest to God, not in the moments of joy and ecstasy, but in our times of struggle when our heart is bravely facing and conquering temptation.

#### 5. OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST.

At the Ascension our Lord enters the Holy of Holies, which is the Heart of God, in a new capacity. He bears up to Heaven something that He brought not down. He came down from Heaven as God's Ambassador to men, showing the credentials of the Father's love. He returns to Heaven as man's Ambassador to God, showing the credentials of a Human Nature perfectly responsive to the Father's will. He died that we might live,

and He ever lives that we may never die. There, before the Father's Throne, He makes intercession for us, showing forth the Wounds of love, the price of our redemption. In the Heavenly places He, our great High Priest, is for ever presenting His sacrifice of a Perfect Human Nature to the Father, an action with which we co-operate every time we offer the Holy Eucharist and show forth His death till He come. That which He does amidst the blinding splendours of light unapproachable is one with that which He does at our Altars on earth, which burn with heavenly glory as He stands in our midst and offers Himself with us to the Father; just as the Sun makes radiant with its light and heat bright spots upon the earth. In the Holy Eucharist every barrier of Time and Space fades away. We make an Act of Faith as we kneel in the church, and the walls crumble into dust, and we are one with the whole wide world: another Act of Faith, and the barriers of Space fade away, and we are one with all the human race on earth: another Act of Faith, and the Gates of Paradise roll back, and we are one with our dear ones who have passed away, and the barriers of Time fade, and we are one with men out of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people who worship before the Throne of God and of the Lamb: another Act of Faith, and the Gates of Heaven open and we are one with Angels and Archangels, and all the company of Heaven and with Virgins and Martyrs and Saints and Apostles, and the Blessed Virgin, and moving up amidst the flashing wings of Cherubim and Seraphim we are one with our great High Priest, and He offers us to the Father in union with His one true, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice which satisfies the Heart of God.

And here we must abide. The Christian life is a life lived in the Heavenly places in union with our Risen and Ascended Lord; this is its centre and source of power, its home where our life is hid with Christ in God. We fulfil our functions in daily life to make

Heaven present on earth, to win others into union with God, and to perfect our sacrifice to the best of our ability: and day by day we pray that, "like as we do believe Thine only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, to have ascended into the heavens, so we may also in heart and mind thither ascend, and with Him continually dwell."

#### 6. THE CORONATION DAY OF THE KING OF KINGS.

Our Lord had spoken of the affairs of the Kingdom, and now He ascends the Throne from which He will one day reign over the whole human race. In spite of our sins and sloth and selfishness that little group of 120 souls has grown into a Church which numbers three hundred million persons who acknowledge Him as King. But, beside these, His influence is changing the hearts of countless millions who do not yet know Him as King. All over India Christ is known and loved by multitudes who are not yet in His Church, His standards are rapidly becoming their standards. At the League of Nations the Christian standard of values is rapidly becoming accepted by men of other religions as the universal standard.

A beautiful legend says that on the nine days which lay between the Ascension and Whitsunday, our Lord was passing upward through the nine choirs of Angels, and receiving from each choir the crown of dominion, "on His head were many diadems," until on the tenth day He presented His Sacrifice to the Father, and the Holy Spirit came down to give birth to the Catholic Church. Pray for the day when the Kingdoms of this world shall have become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, when Industry and Commerce, Science and Art, shall have again laid their crowns at His feet and owned Him King.

#### 7. THE HOME-COMING OF THE SON OF GOD.

The thought of Home-coming was often in the mind of our Lord. No more vivid picture has ever been



drawn than that which He drew of the Son's return home and the Father's greeting in the Parable of the Prodigal Son. Our Lord describes the return home of the Good Shepherd bearing the lost sheep upon his shoulders, and calling together his friends and neighbours to share his joy. So now He has looked forward eagerly to this day of His Ascension when He will return Home. He was disappointed when His Apostles were so absorbed in their own grief that they did not share His joyful anticipation of His Home-coming. "If ye loved Me ye would rejoice because I go to the Father."

What does Home stand for? Think of the millions of soldiers and sailors and travellers and emigrants whose heart turns with intensity of longing to the old Homeland, and who in long years of exile amidst unfamiliar surroundings and hostile forces, and in the solitude of one whom nobody "owns" are yearning for the day when they shall return home, where loving hearts are waiting to receive them as they return, their work accomplished, their warfare ended, their victory won.

Something of this feeling may have been in the heart of our Lord, when at the Ascension He returned Home, His witness borne, His work accomplished, His victory won, His sacrifice perfected, a world redeemed, bringing with Him the human race which "was dead and is alive again, which was lost and is found." If you love Him enter into the joy of the Lord.

### III. THE PREPARATION

Acts i. 12 to end.

*Picture*—The Upper Chamber; the eleven Apostles, our Lady and a group of women; other disciples coming and going, some wrapped in prayer, some ministering to their bodily needs, some engaged in quiet discussions, all filled with eager expectation, waiting and praying for the fulfilment of the promise of the Father.



## CONSIDER—I. THE UPPER CHAMBER.

What sacred memories were associated with it ! What memories of past meetings ! Here it was that all the memories of God's mercies of old time, all the history of God's love for their Nation, and of the deliverance from Egyptian captivity, had been gathered up in grateful memory and thanksgiving in the last passover which they had celebrated with our Lord before His passion.

Here it was that immediately after the last passover He had instituted the first Eucharist which was to become the Christian passover, the memorial of our deliverance from the slavery of sin.

Here it was that on the Resurrection morning, as they were meeting in the shadow of the great disaster which had shattered all their hope, our Lord appeared in their midst in the power of the Resurrection, announcing by His very presence with them His conquest over Satan, sin, and death, and to give His great Commission to His Church.

Here it was that, eight days after, He had appeared again to reassure the faith of St. Thomas, to pronounce His blessing on the faith of those " who have not seen, and yet have believed."

And now here they are gathered in obedience to His command to wait and pray for the promised gift.

It was the first Christian Church. Just as the Church where you were baptised, taught, confirmed, absolved from sin, received Holy Communion, listened to God's word, and offered the Holy Sacrifice, becomes a sacred shrine, rich in the purest and most noble and exalted memories of your life's experience, so to the Apostles was that Upper Chamber where they were gathered.

## 2. WAITING AND PRAYING.

God will not allow His control of life to be usurped by man acting in his own energies, guided by his own unassisted judgment. Nor, on the other hand, will He

bestow His gifts on those who do not expect and desire them.

Before the Son of God became Incarnate, a little group of men and women, inspired by the Holy Spirit, were waiting in the Temple, fasting, praying, grieving over the sins of their Church and Nation, eagerly longing for the hour of their redemption—"the consolation of Israel": Zacharias and Elizabeth whose prayers and yearning were to produce and nurture the forerunner of the Lord; Simeon "righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed unto him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came in the Spirit into the Temple" (St. Luke ii. 25). Anna, "who departed not from the Temple, worshipping with fastings and supplications night and day, . . . and spake of Him to all them that were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem."

It is not the great King, not the skilled diplomatist, nor the renowned general, nor the astute politician who brings deliverance to a Church or Nation—but God alone. And the condition of God's movement to deliver is that spirit of patient waiting, of eager yearning and of hopeful expectation, which is generated by those little groups in the Temple, or the Upper Chamber, or in the village church or great cathedral, who remain steadfast in prayer and wait on God.

### 3. THE ELECTION.

If our Lord had not given clear instructions on the institution of the Church, it is difficult to believe that this waiting time would have been broken by this one act—filling the place left vacant by the fall of Judas. As far as the Apostolic function of witnessing to the Resurrection, any or all of the 120 gathered there, or of the 500 brethren who saw Him (1 Cor. xv. 6,) would inevitably bear their witness. Eleven or thirteen or

five hundred it would not matter, and both Justus and Matthias might have been chosen. But no. A definite and authoritative body must be completed who were to be the official rulers of the Church, selected by men, chosen by God, and soon to be empowered by the Spirit. Our Lord in the forty days which lay between the Resurrection and Ascension had spoken to them of the things concerning the Kingdom, and it is entirely reasonable to believe that these unrecorded instructions were the motive which moved the Apostles to act as they did. In this election of Matthias we see the persistence of God's method, we are required to give Him the best we can: He and He alone can make our offering effectual. We can offer Him a surrendered will. He must give the Power from on High.

#### 4. THE NEED OF PATIENCE.

The time of waiting and praying was essential to the true foundation of the Church as a Supernatural Divine and human institution. For if after our Lord's Ascension the Apostles had rushed forth to proclaim their new experience, then the Church would have been founded on human wilfulness and human energy, conceived by enthusiasm, born of strong emotion, nourished on excitement, and doomed to reaction, disillusionment, despair, and death. This is the natural history of every sect which through impatience has separated off from the Catholic Church, not one of which has survived for five hundred years. The new experiences which came to the Apostles in the Resurrection and Ascension of our Lord, causing a great upheaval of their heart and mind, needed time to mature and grow strong. If they were to become a permanent possession, their relationship with the whole of their past experience must be gradually realised and harmonised, as various memories awakened and had to be co-ordinated with the experience of these new events.

Many true conversions end in disastrous relapse,

because the convert is not allowed to digest and appropriate his new experience, to think out its meaning, and co-ordinate it with his mental constitution. An abiding conversion demands time to take full possession of the Truth when it will be found that the Truth has taken possession of us. The eagerness to proclaim a truth which we have not yet fully appropriated and which has not yet taken possession of our hearts and minds often ends in our losing hold of what we thought we knew. Christian truth is not a philosophic abstraction but a Person, whose life must be made one with ours by prayer and loving intercourse of meditation: "I in them and they in me."

#### 5. THE SUPERNATURAL FELLOWSHIP.

It was not in accordance with God's will that His Church should be a merely human organisation of converted men and women drawn together by the instinct of association to share with one another the richness of a common experience, bound together by the bond of friendship. The Jewish Church was born of "blood," and "the will of the flesh," the bond of natural birth into the Nation. A Church born merely of the instinct of association and of skilful organisation would be a society born "of the will of man."

The Holy Catholic Church is to be born not of blood, not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. His Holy Spirit is to call it into existence, to conceive it, to give it birth, to animate it, to guide it, to rule it, and to fill it with power.

It is not accidentally and secondarily to be a Fellowship which, when it is formed, will receive the divine sanction. It is primarily and essentially a Fellowship into which each converted soul is to be incorporate. The Holy Catholic Church is to be first formed as the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit, and then individuals are to be admitted into it.

Therefore it is of supreme importance that the

initiative shall come from the Holy Spirit, and not from the eager eloquence of fervent disciples. So the Apostles were not allowed to preach the Gospel, nor to make one single convert, but were commanded to wait and pray for that unknown moment when the Holy Spirit should be given to them. Then the Divine and Human Fellowship would be one which would survive all Time and against which the gates of Hell shall not prevail.

The hour and the day of the Spirit's coming was not revealed to them. It is not for them to know the times and seasons which the Father has set in His own authority. They must trust God to fulfil His promise how and when and where He wills. Their sole duty is to keep together and to wait and pray.

How much ruin has been brought upon the Church by the refusal to wait for the hour of divine predestination; by the eagerness of impatient souls to act before the hour has come: the presumption which cannot wait, or the sloth which will not pray. In Church and Diocese and parish "waiting" is essential to fellowship, so that the slow and dull and backward may have time to realise what the clever and learned and brilliant genius can see in a flashing moment. Both the presumption which rushes into premature action, and the sloth which always leans to procrastination, must wait and pray, so that difficulties may be discussed, prejudices dissolved, and explanations understood, and a common mind formed which will be able to greet the Holy Spirit when He comes.

#### IV. THE DAY OF PENTECOST

*The Scene.*—The Precincts of the Temple. In one of the Chambers the Apostles and disciples gathered together and wrapped in prayer. Crowds of worshippers, "devout men from every nation under heaven" passing to and fro in the Temple courts. The sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind. The tongues parting

asunder like as of fire. The burst of ecstatic utterance. Crowds of people hastening to see what it meant—the contagion of exalted conviction kindling every heart.

#### 1. IN THE TEMPLE CHAMBER.

Dr. Chase, in *The Credibility of the Acts*, p. 30, gives these reasons for believing that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit took place in the precincts of the Temple.

(a) Josephus says (*Antiqu.* xviii. 2, 2) that at Pentecost, as at the Passover, it was the custom of the priests to open the gates of the Temple at midnight.

(b) The Greek for “in one place” is the very phrase used by St. Paul (1 Cor. xi. 20) of assembling for worship.

(c) “House” is the term used in the Septuagint (Jer. xxxv. 4) and by Josephus (*Antiqu.* vii. 14, 10) for chambers in the Temple.

(d) “The multitude came together” (verse 6) is the phrase used by St. Luke (St. Luke i. 10; Acts xxi. 36) of the crowd of worshippers in the Temple.

(e) It would explain the presence of large numbers of Jews of the Dispersion (verses 9 and 10).

(f) If the house were not in the Temple, but in one of the narrow streets of the city, it is difficult to see how so vast a multitude could have assembled to hear St. Peter’s words.

We might add that it had been and continued to be the custom of the Apostles to meet in the Temple. “And every day He was teaching in the Temple” (St. Luke xxi. 37). “And day by day continuing stedfastly with one accord in the Temple, and breaking bread at home—Peter and John were going up into the Temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour” (Acts ii. 46; iii. 1). “Then Paul took the men, and the next day, purifying himself with them, went into the Temple” (Acts xxi. 26).

If the outpouring of the Holy Spirit took place in the Upper Chamber, it would emphasise the forming of a new sect. If it took place in the precincts of the Temple,



it would emphasise the expansion of the old national religion into a Catholic or Universal Faith, which was to embrace all mankind.

The coming of the Holy Spirit and the birth of the Holy Catholic Church was not a destruction, but the fulfilment of the Jewish religion. On this day the evangelical prophecies were fulfilled, and the gates of the Temple were flung wide open to men out of every nation, kindred tongue, and people. The Jewish Church, in spite of prophetic warnings, had neglected the purpose of God's election, that they should become the school of sacred knowledge for all the nations of mankind, for the whole human race. Pride had mistaken God's election as an election to a guaranteed salvation, to a final destiny. But God's election is always (*a*) for the sake of others and (*b*) to opportunity, not to final destiny. So the Jew had hardened himself into a narrow Nationalism, indifferent to the world's redemption. And now, at this Pentecost, the narrow Nationalism is shattered, Joel's prophecy is fulfilled: "I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh" (Joel ii. 28), and the Temple has become a house of prayer for all nations: (Isa. lvi. 7), "Mine house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples" (quoted St. Mark xi. 17).

Constantly our Lord had vehemently attacked the narrow, blinded patriotism and national pride of the Jews—as in the case of the Parable of the Good Samaritan (St. Luke x. 30), The Wicked Husbandmen: "The Kingdom of God shall be taken away from you, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof" (St. Matt. xxi. 43). "Many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the Kingdom of Heaven: but the sons of the Kingdom shall be cast forth into outer darkness" (St. Matt. viii. 11). "There were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah . . . and unto none of them was Elijah sent, but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon. . . . There were many lepers in



Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian. And they were all filled with wrath as they heard these things" (St. Luke iv. 25, 26, 27).

But though the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit substituted the Catholic for the National, the Universal for the Racial, the election of faith for the election of birth into the Jewish nation, it took some time before the Apostles learned to think in these wider circles. The same tendencies are manifested in many ages of the Church's life. People often regard the Church as an end in itself, instead of a means to the end of evangelising the world and of establishing the reign of God over the hearts of all men, the coming of the Kingdom of God. The Sacraments of the Church are too often regarded as certificates of guaranteed salvation, instead of means of grace to strengthen us for redemptive co-operation and missionary effort. Christians tend to become spectators and critics instead of warriors in the Holy War. Each Christian must constantly ask himself, "What am I doing for the coming of the Kingdom? What effort am I making to bring other souls to Christ?"

## 2. THE PENTECOSTAL FESTIVAL.

The Harvest Festival of the Jews, on which two loaves, the first fruit of the harvest, were offered to God. On it also was commemorated the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai.

Our Lord often looked on the world as a harvest field of ripe corn. "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He send forth labourers into His harvest" (St. Matt. ix. 37; St. Luke x. 2). "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are white already unto harvest" (St. John iv. 35).

From this day onward the Church has been reaping and gathering in the harvest.

The new Law, the Law of Love, is given: not with the thunder and lightning of Sinai, but with the shout of praise and the tongues of fire of an abiding enthusiasm in kindled hearts and illuminated minds. "I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their hearts will I write it" (Jer. xxxi. 33).

In all human life there is a tendency for the dynamic to become static, for spiritual force to degenerate into fixed outward habitual forms.

### 3. THE SOUND OF THE WIND.

Breath or wind, invisible, vital, powerful in the hurricane, gentle in the breeze, independent of man, had always been the symbol of the Spirit.

"Thus saith the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live" (Ezek. xxxvii. 9).

Our Lord said: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh or whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit" (St. John iii. 8). This by no means suggests disorderly or lawless action: it suggests a force or power which is independent of man both in its origin and its activities. It is power from on high. The Holy Spirit controls and empowers the Church and the individual soul: He is not controlled or limited in His activities by the Church or the individual.

### 4. TONGUES OF FIRE.

"Tongues parting asunder, or distributing themselves like as of fire; and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts ii. 3).

St. John the Baptist had said, "He shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost and with fire" (St. Matt. iii. 11).

Fire which purifies by consuming the dross, which illuminates and warms, was a regular symbol of the divine Presence. To Moses at the Burning Bush,

“Behold the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed” (Exod. iii. 2). To Elijah at Carmel, “The God that answereth by fire, let Him be God” (1 Kings xviii. 24). “A great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord . . . the earthquake—and after the earthquake a fire” (1 Kings xix. 11). “Who maketh His angels winds, and His ministers a flame of fire” (Heb. i. 7). “For our God is a consuming fire” (Heb. xii. 29). Of the Risen and Ascended Lord it is said, “His eyes were as a flame of fire” (Rev. i. 14). All who see the heavenly vision know how the eyes of flame, the flames of love, burn down into the inmost recesses of the soul and purify our motives and our will by burning up all the falsehoods, and insincerities, and deceptions with which we try to deceive ourselves. But the disciples needed “tongues of flame” for their words, verified by their life and deeds, were to be the chief instrument of their witness.

## 5. THE COMING OF THE SPIRIT.

All schematisation of the Divine activities must be made with reserve and diffidence. In this spirit we may reverently discern a difference in the Holy Spirit’s work before and after Pentecost.

(a) Before the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit had acted on men from outside by inspiration. At Pentecost He takes up His abode in the heart and acts from within, not by adding anything new to man’s faculties or activities of his spirit, but by heightening or intensifying those natural powers with the divine energy which illuminates his mind, kindles his heart, and strengthens his will. A young lieutenant, a brilliant scholar and an artist, writes thus to me after his Baptism: “I hardly know what is going on inside myself. But the light I can truly say is fierce and increasing, and all one’s powers, too, are progressively becoming magnified, and this, I think, can be put down to one thing [his

Baptism]. Since my conversion. . . there has come to me such tremendous increase of power, always increasing, not only in handiwork, but far more also in thought, and the power of seeing before you begin, and knowing what you want to do." This is the same experience of the indwelling Spirit, which changed the characters of the Apostles on the day of Pentecost.

(b) Before Pentecost the Holy Spirit acted on men as the Spirit of the Universe, the Universe which in the phrase of Athanasius is the Body of God. He brooded over all creation, implanting those powers and instituting those relationships, attractions, and proportions, which would ultimately develop into energy, matter, mind and morals, beauty, goodness and holiness. He awakened in the heart of man the spirit of wonder and worship, the preference of good to evil, the hunger and thirst for righteousness, the moral affinity, without which man could not behold the vision of God, the desire for communion and the consciousness of sin and shortcoming which alone fit men to become friends of God. Before Pentecost He gave men Wisdom to desire, and to seek and to love the transcendent God. After Pentecost He gave men Power to grow like the God who had made His home in their hearts.

(c) Before Pentecost He worked in creation and evolution. After Pentecost He is working in redemption and unification, to unite men to God and one another in Christ, so that they may be saved from both the guilt and the power of sin. He does not come to take the place of an absent Christ, but to make Christ present; not to supply an absence, but to accomplish a presence. His activity is always directed to bringing man into union with the Divine Humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ, to creating the divine and human fellowship. He overshadowed our Lady, not to supply an absence but to accomplish a Presence, and Jesus was conceived in her womb. He dwelt in the Human Nature of our Lord to fulfil its perfection. He descends upon the

Apostles' Fellowship at Pentecost to make Christ present in the heart of each believer, and to interpret the things of Christ to their hearts and minds. He broods over the waters of Baptism to incorporate each person into the Divine Humanity. He comes to dwell within us at Confirmation, to build up the Christ within us in the life-long process by which we who are made in God's image may grow into His likeness. He overshadows the bread and wine of the Holy Eucharist, not to supply an absence but to accomplish a Presence, and our Lord in His Divine Humanity, His most holy Body and most precious Blood, comes to us that He may evermore dwell in us and we in Him.

O praise God for this glorious energy of the Holy Spirit by which the heart of man has become the Home of God, and the heart of God has become the Home of man

NOTE A.—THE FIRE OF LOVE.

“ Would you divinely know the mysteries of nature, the ground and reason of good and evil in the world, the relation and connection between the visible and invisible world, how the things of time proceed from, are influenced by, and depend upon, the things and powers of eternity, there is but one only key of entrance; nothing can open the vision but seeing with the eyes of that same love which began and carried on, all that is and works in visible and invisible nature. Would you divinely know the mysteries of grace and salvation, would you go forth as a faithful witness of Gospel truths, stay till this fire of divine love has had its perfect work within you For till your heart is an altar on which this heavenly fire never goes out, you are dead in yourself, and can only be a speaker of dead words about things that never had any life within you ” (from the Liberal and Mystical Writings of William Law, *An Address to the Clergy*, p. 113).

## NOTE B.—ECCLESIASTICISM AND RELIGION.

“ Let no man imagine that I am writing against all human literature, arts, and sciences, or that I wish the world to be without them. I am no more an enemy to them than to the common useful labours of life. It is literal learning, verbal contention, and critical strife about the things of God, that I charge with folly and mischief to religion. And in this I have all learned Christendom, both Popish and Protestant, on my side. For they both agree in charging each other with a bad and false Gospel-state because of that which their learning, logic, and criticism do for them. Say not then that it is only the illiterate enthusiast (fanatic) that condemns human learning in the Gospel Kingdom of God. For when he condemns the blindness and mischief of Popish logic and criticism he has all the learned Protestant world with him; and when he lays the same charge to Protestant learning, he has a much larger kingdom of Popish great scholars, logically and learnedly affirming the same thing. So that the private person, charging human learning with so much mischief to the Church, is so far from being led by enthusiasm (fanaticism) that he is led by all the Church-learning that is in the world.

“ Now look where you will, through all the whole nature of things, no divine wisdom, knowledge, goodness and deliverance from sin are anywhere to be found for fallen man, but in these two points :

“ 1. A total and entire entrance into the whole process of Christ.

“ 2. A total resignation to and sole dependence upon, the continual operation of the Holy Ghost, or Christ come again in the Spirit, to be our never-ceasing Light, Teacher, and Guide into all those ways of virtue in which He Himself walked in the flesh.

“ All besides this, call it by what name you will, is but dead work, a vain labour of the old man to new create



himself. And here let it be well observed that in these two points consist the whole of the mystic divinity to which a Jewish orthodoxy at this day is so great an enemy. For nothing else is meant or taught by it, but a total dying to self (called the Process or Cross of Christ) that a new creature (called Christ in us, or Christ come in the Spirit) may be begotten in purity and perfection of the first man's union with God.

"Now let the Christian forget, or depart from, this one mystic way of salvation; let anything else be thought of or trusted to, but the Cross of Christ and the Spirit of Christ; and then, though Churches and Preachers, and Prayers, and Sacraments are everywhere in plenty, yet nothing better can come of it than a Christian Kingdom of Pagan vices along with a mouth-belief of an Holy Catholic Church and Communion of Saints" (William Law, *An Address to the Clergy*, p. 114).

#### THE GOSPEL OF EXPERIENCE.

"Hence the Apostles were new men, entered into a new Kingdom come down from Heaven, enlightened with new light, inflamed with new love; and preached not any absent or distant thing, but Jesus Christ as the Wisdom and Power of God, felt and found within them, and as a power of God ready to be communicated, in the same manner as a new birth from above, to all that would repent and believe in Him. It was to this change of Nature, of Life and Spirit, to their certain and immediate deliverance from the power of sin, to be possessed and governed by the gifts and graces of an heavenly Life, that men were then called, as true Christianity. And the preachers of it bore witness, not to a thing that they had heard, but to a power of salvation, a renewal of nature, a birth of heaven, a sanctification of the spirit, which they themselves had received. Gospel Christianity then stood upon its own true ground; it appeared to be what it was. And what was it? Why, it was an awakened Divine Life set up amongst



men; itself was its own proof; it appealed to its proper judge, to the heart and conscience of man, who was alone capable of being touched with these offers of a new life" (William Law, *The Way of Divine Knowledge*, p. 131).

### THE CO-OPERATIVE WILL.

"For nothing leads or carries you anywhere, nothing generates either life or death in you, but the working of your mind, will, and desire. If your will is angelic, you are an angel, and angelic happiness must be yours. If your will is with God, you work with God; God is then the life of your soul, and you will have your life with God to all Eternity. If you follow an earthly will, every step you take is a departure from God, till you become as incapable of God and the life of God as the animals of this world. If your will worketh in pride and self-exaltation, in envy and wrath, in hatred and ill-will, in deceit, hypocrisy, and falseness, you work with the Devil, you are generating his nature within you, and making yourself ready for the Kingdom of Hell.

"And thus it is that our works follow us; and that everyone will be rewarded according to his works; and none can reap anything else but that which he hath sown. And the seed of everything that can grow in us is our will. The will maketh the beginning, the middle, and the end of everything; it is the only workman in nature, and everything is its work. It has all power; its works cannot be hindered; it carries all before it; it creates as it goes; and all things are possible to it. It enters wherever it wills, and finds everything that it seeks; for its seeking is its finding. The will overrules all nature, because nature is its offspring and born of it; for all the properties of nature, whether they be good or evil, in darkness or in light, in love or in hatred, in wrath or in meekness, in pride or humility, in trouble or joy, are all of them the offspring or birth of the will; as that birth so they live; and as that change so they change. So that whatever you are or whatever you feel,

is all owing to the working and creating power of your own will. This is your God or your Devil, your Heaven or your Hell; and you only have so made of one or the other as your will, which is the first mover, is either given up to the one or to the other. For when the will of man is not, there be both nothing; and where his will is, there is all that something, which be both, be it of what kind it will; and it is inseparable from him till his will worketh contrary to it" (William Law, *The Way of Divine Knowledge*, p. 137).

NOTE C.—EXTRACT FROM ST. BASIL ON "THE HOLY SPIRIT." (Christian Classics Series.)

1. *God is Spirit* (p. 52).

It is, then, impossible when we hear of a Spirit, "to picture to the imagination a circumscribed nature or one which is subject to turning or changing, or which is at all like the creature; but rising to the sublimest thoughts we are compelled to think of an intellectual essence, infinite in power, illimitable in magnitude, immeasurable by periods and ages; who ungrudgingly imparts His excellence; unto whom all things needing sanctification turn; for whom all things living long according to their excellence, being as it were watered by his breath, and assisted to attain their own proper and natural end; perfective of all else, Himself lacking nothing; who lives not because He is endowed with life, but because He is the Giver of life; who does not grow by additions, but is at once full, self-sustaining, and everywhere present; the source of sanctification, light invisible, who as it were illuminates every faculty of reason in its search for truth; unapproachable by nature, accessible by reason of His goodness; filling all things by His power, but communicable only to the worthy; not shared by all in the same degree, but distributing His energy according to the proportion of faith; simple in essence, manifold in powers; wholly

present with each individual and wholly everywhere; impassibly divided, and shared without division, like a sunbeam, whose gracious influence is as much his who enjoys it as though he were alone in the world, but which also blends with the air, and shines over land and sea. Thus, too, the Spirit is present to everyone who receives Him, as if there were only one receiver, but bestows sufficient and complete grace on all; whom all things that partake of Him enjoy according to their capacity, and not according to the extent of His power."

2. *Radiant in the Sanctified* (p. 54).

"He, shedding His bright beams upon those who are cleansed from every stain, makes them spiritual by communion with Himself. And as clear transparent bodies, if a ray of light falls on them, become radiant themselves and diffuse their splendour all around, so souls illuminated by the indwelling Spirit are rendered spiritual themselves, and impart their grace to others."

3. *The Discernment of Values* (p. 79).

"The revelation of mysteries belongs properly to the Spirit, according as it is written 'God hath revealed them to us through the Spirit' (1 Cor. ii. 10). But how could thrones and dominions and principalities and authorities live the life of happiness, were it not that they ever behold the face of their Father in Heaven? But there is no vision without the aid of the Spirit. For as at night, if you leave the house in darkness the eyes are blind and the faculties inactive, and the value of things is not discerned, but gold and iron are trodden on alike through ignorance, so in the order of spiritual things it is impossible for that law-abiding life to continue without the Spirit, any more than an army can maintain discipline in the absence of the commander, or a chorus preserve harmony without the control of its leader."

4. *The Worship of the Spirit.*

“Wherefore also in worship, the Holy Spirit is inseparable from the Father and the Son. For dissociated from Him you will not worship at all; but being in Him you cannot by any means separate Him from God, any more than you can sever the light from things seen, for it is impossible to see the image of the invisible God, except by the illumination of the Spirit. And he who gazes upon the image cannot sever the light from the image, for the cause of the vision is of necessity seen with the things we see. So then, as is meet and right, through the illumination of the Spirit, we behold the effulgence of the glory of God; and through the impress we are led up to Him of whom He is the impress and exact representation.”

## V. THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE HOLY GHOST

“And they continued stedfastly in the Apostles’ teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers ” (Acts ii. 42).

“And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, according as any man had need. And day by day, continuing stedfastly with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread at home, they did take their food with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to them day by day those that were being saved ” (Acts ii. 44).

## CONSIDER—I. REDEMPTION BY FELLOWSHIP.

All sin is selfishness. Man can be saved from sin only by being saved from selfishness. Man can be saved from selfishness only by being incorporated into fellowship, so that he may lose his selfish isolated ego to find it in the larger relationships of brotherhood. This is the fundamental law of eternal life, that self-

realisation can only come by self-sacrifice, losing our life to save it. The Holy Catholic Church, then, is not an accidental by-product of the preaching of the Gospel: nor an addition to, nor an accretion on the original plan of salvation; nor the result of the natural development of the instinct of association. It is the essence of the Gospel. It is the primary and essential work of the Holy Spirit to bind men into a divine and human fellowship, which shall be in very truth the Body of Christ, through which He may continue to teach and act for the world's redemption. As at first He overshadowed our Lady and the Body of Christ was conceived in her womb, so now He overshadows the Apostolic band and the Body of Christ is formed, the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints, the Brotherhood of the Baptised, the Fellowship of the Holy Ghost. The Church, then, is not a human partnership, constituted by mutual agreement, which can be cancelled as readily as it is made, but a divine fellowship, constituted by a birth from above, a family whose relationship may be neglected or violated, but cannot be dissolved. The Church is not an evolution from within, but a birth from above. It is not merely a collection of individuals all moved by the same motive and inspired by the same process, as when hundreds of men hurry along the streets to catch the same train, with the same direction, motive, and aim, but wholly unconcerned with one another. It is not a mob all going the same way, but a disciplined army, knit together by a common loyalty to the King, obedient to the same officers who hold His commission, nourished by the same Sacraments, disciplined by the same drill. But it is more than an army, for an army is only a temporary organisation of mutual dependence for a sectional purpose. The Church is not merely a regiment on the barrack square, but a family in a home.

To create the family is the primary work of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. The corporate aspect of Religion

is not secondary or subordinate; it is primary and essential. It is prior both in idea and in time to the individual aspect. The Apostles were not allowed to proclaim the Gospel or to convert a single soul until the fellowship of the Holy Ghost had been formed; and when the Fellowship had been formed the one way of salvation preached by the Apostles was to be baptised into that fellowship. While it in no way limited the Spirit's activities, it was the covenanted sphere of His working. It is necessary to emphasise this priority of the corporate life, the Gospel of the Kingdom, as so many souls have been misled by the false and exaggerated individualism which makes the salvation of the individual soul the beginning and end of religion; and this leads to a serious perversion of the Gospel by making God a means instead of an end. The glory of God and the coming of His Kingdom is the one aim of religion: the sanctification and salvation of the individual soul is the necessary means to that end.

## 2. THREE ASPECTS OF RELIGION.

There is a spurious spirituality which places spirit and matter in a false antithesis, and believes a thing to be more spiritual the less it has to do with the material universe, and with outward bodily forms, and institutional ordinances. This false spirituality, which has split Christendom into innumerable fragments, finds no support in the Bible. In fact, it is sternly rebuked by St. Paul, who contrasts it with the fruit of the Spirit, and denounces as "the works of the flesh" all those mental attitudes which destroy fellowship—"Now the works of the flesh are manifest . . . enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, heresies, envyings," etc. These causes of divisions are not the result of an exalted spirituality, but the effect of an exaggerated assertion of the carnal individualism which destroys Brotherhood.

A true spirituality does not despise or ignore the



material universe and the outward form. We have seen how from the beginning of creation the Holy Spirit has made the material or physical universe the vehicle of the spiritual, everywhere penetrating, purifying, and uplifting the material universe to become a burning bush on fire with God yet unconsumed. Through the age-long process of evolution this method of penetration, purification, and quickening has proceeded until the grey matter of the brain has become the responsive instrument of the mind and the means of communicating immortal thought and undying aspiration, from mind to mind and heart to heart. In our own day, through wireless waves, the lifeless ether has become a burning bush, on fire yet unconsumed, aflame with the thoughts and hopes and fears of men. The heavens have always declared the glory of God; the radiant stars and the glow of sunrise and the crimson of sunset have awakened in the hearts of men thoughts about God. But now the universal ether has become the vehicle of the thought of man, on fire with his directive purposes, his thoughts and emotions, so that we in England can listen to the thoughts and words and songs of our brethren in Australia, from the other side of the world.

So far, then, from despising or ignoring the material universe and the outward form, the higher spirituality of the Holy Spirit teaches us through the sacramental ordinances of the Church to redeem matter and to make it the vehicle of the Spiritual. We may truly say that without this sacramental consecration of the material, a religion is defective and unspiritual.

Man is a complex of body, soul, and spirit. He has no means of communicating his thoughts and feelings to other men, except through the medium of the material. The prophet and the evangelist must use the atmosphere, St. Paul must use pen and ink, the artist must grind his colours and use canvas, the musician must make his notation and strike his instrument to cause those vibrations, if he desire to communicate to others his



glimpse of the heavenly vision. So, to meet this human complex of body, soul, and spirit there must be three essential aspects of religion—the institutional, the ethical, and the mystical.

The Institutional aspect of Religion is all that side of it which is concerned with Outward Forms and Ceremonies, Sacraments, Orders, Discipline, and whatever is essential to corporate social life.

The Ethical aspect of Religion is all that is concerned with Righteousness, Justice, Equity, Truth, and Honesty.

The Mystical aspect of Religion is union with God by Love.

Each aspect is essential, though there is a relative subordination. As our bodily life is subordinate to the life of the soul, and the life of the soul is dependent on the life of the Spirit, so the Institutional aspect of Religion must be subordinated to the Ethical, and the Ethical derives all its authority and vitality from the Mystical. But the Holy Spirit is the Creator and Life-giver of each aspect of religion. As He conceived the Body of Christ in the Virgin's womb—a body with an outward form and all the necessary mechanism of bones, muscles, and nerves—so He conceives and animates all the mechanism of Institutional religion in the Holy Catholic Church, the Body of Christ. As He not only kindles the spirit of man, and illuminates his mind, but also claims the body of man to be His temple, the shrine where He may dwell, so He quickens and animates the Sacraments and ordinances of the Church with His life-giving presence, and makes them the channels of His power. As the indwelling presence of a loving spirit can transfigure the material chemicals which compose the eyes of the face until they glow with love and joy or peace, so the Holy Spirit can transfigure the outward ordinances of the Church with the aura of His presence. It is then a false and carnal mind which fails to sanctify the material universe and to consecrate

the outward form. The highest and the purest spirituality penetrates and purifies the whole universe, and in the form and colour of the painting, the strength and perfection of architecture, the notes and harmonies of music, the rhythm of movement in the dance, and in the water and bread and wine of the Sacraments, uplifts the material to become the vehicle of the spiritual, the medium of the communion between God and man.

### 3. THE APOSTLES' COMMUNION AND FELLOWSHIP.

It is significant and in harmony with the foregoing that St. Paul uses this word *Koinonia* (fellowship) (Acts ii. 42) to describe these three aspects of the Church's life. In Romans xv. 26 the word is used for the collection made for the poor at Jerusalem, "For it hath been the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution (*Koinonia*) for the poor among the saints that are at Jerusalem." Again, in 1 Cor. i. 9, he writes: "God is faithful, through whom ye were called into the fellowship (*Koinonia*) of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord." Again, in 1 Cor. x. 16, he writes: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a communion (*Koinonia*) of the Blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a communion (*Koinonia*) of the Body of Christ?"

St. John uses the same word *Koinonia* (communion, fellowship, participation, sharing) in that great passage in which he proclaims the meaning of the Gospel and the Church. "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also, that ye also may have fellowship (*Koinonia*) with us: yea, and our fellowship (*Koinonia*) is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ" (1 St. John i. 3).

We see, then, that this same word *Koinonia* is used for the collection of alms, for the sacramental mystery of the Body and Blood of our Lord, and for the mystical union of the soul with God and the Brotherhood. This teaches us that the fellowship of the Holy Ghost is not

merely a mental union of exalted thoughts and aspirations which is too refined to think of such material things as pounds, shillings, and pence, or dollars and cents. Truly man does not live by bread alone; but, on the other hand, he does not live at all without it; and there is no love of God, but such as shows itself in love for man. The love which does not find economic expression in sharing our possessions with others, either by common ownership or the strictest stewardship, is often merely a self-indulgent sentiment which relieves distress because the sight of it is disagreeable.

Under the first flush of enthusiasm the Apostles' Fellowship made a generous experiment in communism—"And all that believed were together, and they had all things in common; and they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, according as any man had need" (Acts ii. 44). "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul: and not one of them said that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common" . . . "neither was there among them any that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them at the Apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto each, according as any one had need" (Acts iv. 32, 34, 35). From these passages is derived the Christian Socialists' ideal "from each according to his capacity, to each according to his need."

This first experiment in communism had to be abandoned, as grave corruptions soon crept in as the white heat of Pentecostal enthusiasm cooled down into the steady glow of normal life. But the primitive Church never altogether lost the truth that the Love of God can only be manifested by love for man. "But whoso hath the world's goods, and beholdeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in him?" (1 St. John iii. 17). Professor Harnack describes the Church

of the second century as a Labour Union, which provided work for the unemployed or maintenance when work could not be found; which cared for the widow and orphan, and had its sick benefit club; and this material or economic expression of the love of God extended far beyond the circle of the brotherhood in love for all men because they were made in God's image. Harnack attributes the rapid expansion of the Church largely to this economic expression of the love of God in love and care for men: and there is need today to revive this aspect of the Church's life which made philanthropy the ritual and ceremonial of the worship of God.

For the meaning and purpose of the Church's life is not the perfection of the individual soul in isolation as a separate unit, but the bringing of the individual into his place in the fellowship that he may make his own contribution to the Brotherhood. God has one purpose, Man has one destiny, history has one meaning, and life one motive, the union of the whole human race in a universal Brotherhood of Man beneath the Fatherhood of God, the binding of all the nations on earth into a Co-operative Commonwealth, the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, the Fellowship of the Holy Ghost.

This purpose of God found noble expression after the War in the message issued by all the Premiers of the British self-governing Dominions to the Empire. The message runs: "The spirit of goodwill among men rests on spiritual forces: the hope of a Brotherhood of Humanity on the deeper spiritual truth of the Fatherhood of God."

"For the Christian, God is one who has a definite purpose for mankind, a purpose that includes all aspects of life. That purpose is the transforming of human society into what Jesus called the Kingdom of God—a social order in which all men, conscious of their sonship to God, will live with their fellows as brothers, and seek the common good. To worship God, therefore, is to commit oneself to this divine goal for the whole

family of man." "Christianity and Industrial Reconstruction." This is the work of the Holy Spirit, to bind men together in the Fellowship of the Holy Ghost.

## VI. THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS

### I. THE CORPORATE AND THE INDIVIDUAL LIFE.

The great unsolved problem of social science and philosophy is to find and maintain the right relationship between the individual and the corporate life, between the citizen and the State. The undue exaltation of the individual leads to anarchy or despotism; the undue exaltation of the State as absolute leads to the destruction of liberty and the crushing of the soul. The failure to solve that problem satisfactorily seems to be due to the defect of the two-dimensional methods of thought which consider the matter as a duel between the claims of man and the claims of the State. By Christian teaching the problem is solved, and the balance preserved by the three-dimensional method. Both the Corporate and the individual life are referred directly to God for their sanction and motive. The Catholic Church is an ellipse with two foci, the Church and the Individual. Each is created by God: each exists only for His glory: each is filled with the Spirit, led by the Spirit, and empowered by the Spirit. Because each has direct reference to God as its sanction and motive, therefore their relationship to one another is right and healthy. The Church exists to glorify God by the establishment of His reign over the hearts of men, the coming of His Kingdom. The Individual exists to glorify God by the salvation and sanctification of his soul in the Fellowship of the Church. The Church exists to sanctify the Individual. The Individual exists to enrich and glorify the Church.

So in the Acts of the Apostles, which has been called the Gospel of the Holy Spirit, and in the Epistles, we see this two-fold activity of the Holy Spirit. On the

one hand, He presides over the Councils of the Church, "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us" (Acts xv. 28). He selects and commissions His servants, "The Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them" (Acts xiii. 2). "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Ghost has made you bishops" (Acts xx. 28). He directs Philip (Acts viii. 29), and Peter (Acts x. 19), where to preach, and what to do, and hinders Paul from going into Bithynia (Acts xvi. 6, 7). While He thus presides over the corporate life of the Church, He also sanctifies each individual as one by one they are baptised into His Fellowship (Acts ii. 38), and one by one confirmed by the laying on of the Apostles' hands (Acts viii. 17, xix. 6). Not only does He teach and illuminate the mind of each (St. John xiv. 16 and 26, xvi. 13; 1 Cor. xii. 8), but He makes each body His Temple (1 Cor. vi. 19).

It is to be noted that His work in the Church and in the soul are supplementary one to the other, and that His guidance is to be found in their mutual interaction. The decrees of Councils are not to be recognised as His work until they have been accepted and ratified by the faithful. The illuminated conscience of the individual needs to be referred to the judgment of the Fellowship if it is to have the full assurance of the Holy Spirit's guidance. For many of the most cruel things in history have been done by men whose conscience was uneducated and undisciplined, and who mistook their own self-will for the Holy Spirit's guidance; and the Church has become deflected from its true development when it has suppressed the conscience of individuals or deprived them of all opportunity of expressing it.

The interaction of the corporate and individual work of the Holy Spirit is seen in the formation of the Canon of Scripture, the Holy Bible. For it was by His inspiration that individuals were moved to write the sacred books and letters, but it was the corporate sense of the



Church which decided by a gradual process which of these writings should have a place in the Bible.

## 2. THE CHURCH, THE BODY OF CHRIST.

In pleading at Stockholm for a Continuation Committee to carry on the work of the Conference on Life and Work, an eloquent American pointed out that it was useless for us to congratulate ourselves on the fine unity of spirit which had become manifest unless we had a body in which to express that spirit, for as he truly said: "Disembodied spirits don't saw wood!" So from the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit formed a body or fellowship of Spirit-bearing men and women to be the Body of Christ through which He might continue to teach and act, and work out the world's redemption.

The description of the Church as the Body of Christ, of which each one of us is a member, a living part (1 Cor. xii.), is peculiarly helpful to us today: for not only does it represent to us as to St. Paul a unity of co-operating members, but we now know that our bodies are composed of countless millions of living cells, each one of which has an independent life of its own, and is moved by an imperative instinct to spend that life in contributing to the welfare of the whole. If you cut your finger, a breach in the walls of God's temple, millions of cells at once rush to the seat of the disaster, some to cleanse the wound of dirt, others to granulate building loop upon loop to bridge over the gap. Some cells, called neurons, compose the nerves; 9,200 million cells are in the cortex of the brain, 2 million bone-builders in the thigh-bone of a new-born infant—so that your body is a vast commonwealth of countless of millions of cells, each one of whom has an independent life of its own, rudimentary instincts and powers of perception, a function to perform for the whole body, and an imperative instinct to spend itself on the good of the whole. If the body is sick it means that some



cells are under-nourished or injured and failing to perform their function. So we may look at our body in two ways: we may contemplate it as one single unit, controlled by one Spirit, directed by one will, responsive to one feeling, animated by one life blood, a perfect harmony of differing functions; or we may think of it as though it were the British Empire or the United States, a vast co-operative commonwealth of countless millions of living cells as described above.

So with the Church—the Body of Christ. At your Baptism you were incorporated into this Divine Humanity, and became a living cell in the Body of Christ, with a definite function to perform for that Body as Bishop, priest, or deacon, as scholar, artist, or scientist, as father, mother, wife, or child, as a patient sufferer or a fervent pray-er, a devout worshipper, a humble communicant. The health of the Body is dependent on the faithful discharge of your duty or function, and the spirit of consecration which fills you with the passion of self-sacrifice, to spend your life and your whole being in the service of the Body of Christ. If in any place at any time the Church in some parish or country is cold or apathetic, sick or paralysed, it is because some of the cells or souls are failing faithfully to perform their function, are under-nourished with the life of Christ, or irresponsive to His Spirit. And because the good of the whole Body is dependent on the perfection of each cell or soul, each one of us is bound to strive for his own perfection so that he may make the best contribution he can to the life of the whole. The Holy Spirit gave birth to this Body of Christ, constitutes it, animates it, fills it with power. One Will, the Will of God, controls it. One Blood, the precious Blood of Christ, nourishes it. One Heart, the sacred Heart of Jesus, inflames it with a passion for the coming of the Kingdom.

This Body of Christ includes not only all the Baptised on earth at the present time, but all the souls beyond the veil and the Saints in Heaven. For at death we do not

pass out of Christ. "Neither life nor death . . . nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. viii. 39). At death we still abide in the Body of Christ, but pass on to fulfil other functions and activities with unhampered and liberated powers.

### 3. THE HISTORICAL AND MYSTICAL ASPECTS OF THE CHURCH.

#### (i.) *The Need of a True Synthesis.*

At the root of much confusion of thought there lies the fallacy of a false antithesis. In the scientific method men are obliged to work by abstraction. They take one aspect of a subject, and isolate it from its relation to the whole for the sake of minute and concentrated study. This is legitimate and necessary. But disaster comes when they mistake the truth of this abstraction for the truth of the whole, and place some one aspect of a subject in contrast and opposition to another aspect. The great surgeon Sir Berkeley Moynihan has pointed out that surgery made little progress before the discovery of anæsthetics because our knowledge of the body was largely gathered from post-mortem examination. Each limb and muscle and nerve was seen as a dead static thing: no throbbing life pulsed through them: no co-operative reaction and response was possible: they were merely a collection of isolated parts, each essential to the whole, but now no longer in the vital co-operative union of their continuum, the living body—in active, sensitive, moving, throbbing contact with its environment—the Universe and the Universal Mind.

But as soon as anæsthetics were discovered, surgeons were able to study the body as a living entity, not quite in the fulness of its activity, as the conscious mind had been drugged into unconsciousness, but still a living body in the full activity of its subconscious processes, as when one is asleep. Now they were able to study each limb and nerve and muscle, not as a dead section,

but as a living active process in the actual performance of its function, acting and reacting to innumerable stimuli, correlating its activities to a thousand other co-operating functions.

The same is true of Divine Truth. Theologians have to work by the Scientific Method. They have to study some subject such as Holy Baptism or the Holy Eucharist in abstraction. They work hard on the dead records of the past. They bring the searchlight of criticism to bear on the documents and the controversies of other centuries. They correlate their results and make a scheme, and construct a plan of Salvation. Now all this is noble and necessary work: but it is a post-mortem examination: it is an aspect of the Truth in isolation. This Tradition of the Past is very sacred, and quite essential to the fulness of the Truth: but it needs to be supplemented with the Experience of the Present, and each will correct and modify the other. It is a great thing to be learned in criticism and to know exactly who did not write some Gospel, and which verses were inserted at some later date, to be able to say with confidence that our Lord did not really say such a saying, for it is in conflict with the conception you have formed of Him, and will not fit into your scheme. Such critical knowledge at its best has some value in presenting the historical figure of Christ to us. But such post-mortem investigations need to be supplemented and corrected by living contact with our living Saviour, in prayer and meditation and communion. What He said two thousand years ago is throbbing round the world and changing the heart of mankind and has won from the Ages an undying echo. But He is not now dumb: and what He says to you today in prayerful communion will purify your heart if you obey it.

#### (ii.) *Creed, Dogma, and Tradition.*

While we value Creed, Dogma, and Tradition, as representing the stored-up experience of the past, a

post-mortem dissection, we must insist on seeing these truths which have been handed down to us in present vital activity, as they function in the living soul and in the living Church, producing the Fruit of the Spirit.

(1) *The Creed* is a collection of Truths (spiritual realities) and Facts (things done) and Values (judgments formed) handed down to us from the distant past. It is of priceless value as representing and preserving as well as words can do the corporate experience and the valuation of this experience placed upon the facts by those who actually saw the events happen. These events happened on the stage of History, in the Time and Space series. These historical facts cannot be reproduced, so it is of vital and essential importance for us to preserve the valuation made of them by those who saw and heard and touched and knew and loved the Word made Flesh. "That which was from the beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld, and our hands handled, concerning the Word of Life (and the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare unto you the life, the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us); that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also, that ye also may have fellowship with us: yea, and our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ" (1 St. John i. 1). To lose or underrate the valuations of such a witness would indeed be a disaster.

But we must not be content merely to receive their witness; we must try to reproduce the experience on another plane. For each historical event in the earthly life of our Lord is the manifestation in Time of an Eternal process: so that though the historical event cannot be reproduced, its mystical coefficient may be experienced. Christ cannot again be born at Bethlehem; but the eternal process of the issuing forth of the Love and Life of God to seek and find each soul and to unite each person, body and soul to Himself, that process of at-oneing or

Atonement which was manifested historically on Christmas Day at Bethlehem, must be reproduced in each soul by the new birth of water and the Spirit in Holy Baptism, and by that extension of our regeneration expressed in the Christmas Collect: "Grant that we being regenerate, and made Thy children by adoption and grace, may *daily be renewed* by Thy Holy Spirit."

It is the gracious work of the Holy Spirit to translate each event wrought out on the plane of History into a mystical process in the heart of each man, so that what Christ did for us He may do in us: dying again unto sin in our heart, and by dying shattering the power of sin over us; rising again whenever we repent; ascending again whenever we aspire after holiness. We should take each Article of the Creed and ask ourselves, "What is the working value of this Article to me? What place has it in my life? How is my life different because I believe it from what it would be if I said I do not believe it?"

Those who despise or reject the Creeds suffer grievous loss. For the individual's experience of the Divine is necessarily partial and imperfect, inevitably coloured by his mental and moral qualities, his passions and prejudices, his social environment into which he is born, in such a nation at such a time; and without the Creed he has no standard by which to test and correct his judgments, and to keep the due proportion of the Faith. So he is likely to be swept away by one vividly realised truth and to lose the balance of the whole, or to abandon himself to some sectional ethical enthusiasm of the passing moment which may distort his judgment.

May we not find the right synthesis of the Historical and Mystical in some such way as this? When we are contemplating God's will and His activities, we look for the temporal manifestations of eternal processes in the study of History. When we are contemplating God Himself, we shall do so best on the Mystic plane, where there is no procession of Time and Space, no up or down, no here or there, no now or then. So it matters

not whether we speak of Christ in us or we in Him. He is at once both the basis of all human personality and the overarching environment of the soul, who spans Eternity and unites the past and present and future into one—"I am the first and the last, and the Living One." Again, it matters not whether we say that Christ our great High Priest is present at our altars in the Holy Eucharist, or that in the Holy Eucharist all barriers of Time and Space fade away, and we are caught up into the Heavenly State and are one with our great High Priest as He offers Himself with us to the Father. A dogma of the Church is not an expression of a new truth, but the authoritative and authentic formulation of a truth, which from the beginning was contained in the deposit of revealed religion.

(2) *Dogma*.—The dogmas, or teachings of the Church, are not like a bag of marbles—cold, lifeless, rigidly detached one from the other. Dogma is the protective shield of Divine Truth, which enables us to hand on to generation after generation the experiences of the past. No form of words can exhaustively express the Truth. But a dogma is a form of words which may save us from errors and preserve the corporate experience and valuation of the Fellowship. They are the husks which shield a kernel of vital truth which must live and glow in our hearts. They are like the notes on a musical score—symbols which preserve and pass on to us the Divine harmonies of some inspired Master Musician, and which, when we translate them into sound, will enable us to share his inspiration and liberate our soul into ecstasy. And it is the gracious work of the Holy Spirit to interpret them to us and to kindle in us the same flame from the parent fire.

#### 4. THE GIFTS AND FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

##### (i.) *Universal and Particular*.

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit enriches each individual with the gifts of Supernatural Faith and Hope



and Love and gradually produces in his character the fruit which bears witness to His Presence. Of course Christians claim no monopoly of these gifts and fruits, but only that we who are baptised into the Church, the Fellowship of the Holy Ghost, have a grace given to us which, if we make full use of it, will quicken, strengthen, and heighten our natural powers by closest union with God. God's love in electing or choosing us to receive this grace is not a favouritism which detracts from or diminishes His love for every man. Love is not like water. If you take a cup of water out of a pitcher there is so much the less left in the pitcher. But love is not like water: it is like fire. If we light a candle, and then from its flame light a thousand other candles, we increase the illumination, but we do not diminish the original flame. The sun shines on all men alike, good or bad. But when we gather up its rays in a burning glass and focus them on a piece of paper until it bursts into flame, we do not deprive anyone of the sunshine, nor diminish the healing rays available for all. So it is with the Love and Grace of God, and the energy of the Holy Spirit.

"From the beginning, the Holy Spirit of God, as we have already seen, has dwelt in every created soul and wrought in every man born into this world. No soul will be cast out of the peace of God into eternal darkness which might not, if it had only put forth the will, have dwelt with God for ever. God casts no one away. He deprives no soul whom He has made of the grace of salvation. Even throughout the heathen world the Spirit of God is present working in the hearts of men. It they fail of eternal life, the failure is in their own wills, and not in the Will of God" (Manning, *The Internal Mission of the Holy Ghost*, fourth edition, 1883, p. 67).

(ii.) *Faith, Hope, and Love.*

"For by grace have ye been saved through faith: and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God" (Eph. ii. 8).



When we speak of these gifts of God as supernatural, we mean that they are not the products of our own nature, but come from God. We do not, as some have done in the past, regard man's nature as totally corrupt. We regard it as utterly inadequate. It is not equal to the task of bringing man to that end for which he was created—the Vision of God and union with Him. Sin has separated us from God by a gulf or chasm. Our nature may be very good as far as it goes; but it does not go far enough. A ten-foot plank may be made of excellent wood: it may be lowered in the right direction; but it will never bridge a twelve foot stream. A bullet aimed at a target 1,000 yards away may be a very good bullet, made of the best lead, fired in the right direction with perfect aim, but if the cordite in the cartridge is only strong enough to carry it 800 yards, it will never hit the target, no matter how great the desire and perseverance of the rifleman. So our finest natural virtues may be admirable, but they cannot be adequate, and will to the end oblige us to say, "All have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii. 23).

Years ago, when I asked Father Dolling what was the secret of his wonderful power to redeem the most debased and degraded of men, the "hopeless cases" as they were called, who were sent to him from all over England, he answered: "I live inside them by love. When they have ceased to believe in themselves, I trust them, though I know that they are untrustworthy. It is the only way to make them worthy of trust. When they are in despair and never expect to be better, I hope for them with full confidence and do for them what they cannot do for themselves. When they have lost all self-respect and have destroyed their ability to love, I love them and am soon rewarded with a responsive love." This, of course, is the Divine method of prevenient grace. "So let us exult in our hope of attaining God's glorious ideal. And not only that, but let us also exult in our troubles; for we know that trouble develops endurance,

and endurance strength of character, and strength of character hope, and that hope never disappoints; because God's love for us floods our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us. For while we were still powerless (helpless), Christ, in God's good time, died for the ungodly. . . . But God puts His love for us beyond all doubt by the fact that Christ died on our behalf while we were still sinners" (Rom. v. 2, 3, 6, 8). (Weymouth, *The New Testament in Modern Speech*.)

I have quoted the words of Father Dolling because, if we remember that he was only God's noble agent in the redemption of these souls, and if we lift the idea onto the plane of the Infinite and Eternal, they represent to us in the best way the activities of the Holy Spirit in redemption and sanctification. And these personal relationships of indwelling by love are better fitted to express God's methods than such expressions of formal scientific theology as "infusion," "imputed," "imparted," etc., and it is the method which each Christian is bound to follow in the imperative task of trying to save souls.

*Faith* is an act of our whole personality reaching out with eager desire—a hunger and thirst for righteousness, goodness, God. We may discern in it many strands woven together to make up the whole: there is in it an element of intellectual assent, of spiritual perception, and of moral courage.

(1) *Credence*, or intellectual assent. "Without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that seek after Him" (Heb. xi. 6).

(2) *Spiritual Perception*—the power to perceive the Realities which move behind the outward forms of things. "Now faith is the well-grounded assurance of that for which we hope, and a conviction of the reality of things which we do not see" (Heb. xi. 1) (Weymouth's Translation). "Now faith means we are confident of what we hope for, convinced of what we do not see" (Moffatt). It has the special blessing of

our Risen Lord, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (St. John xx. 29).

(3) *Moral Courage*—a readiness to stake our life on our highest conviction as to righteousness, goodness, and God. "In every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is acceptable to him." ("Reverences God and lives a good life—is welcomed by Him," Moffatt) (Acts x. 35). The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews mentions many national heroes, such as the great legislator Moses, "who endured as seeing Him that is invisible," Major-Generals such as Gideon and Barak, the prize-fighter Samson, an Army Chaplain—Samuel. But as it would be a sin against the Holy Spirit's universal inspiration to confine ourselves to the heroes of one nation, let us listen to Socrates as he illustrates the nature of faith when offering up his life as a sacrifice to Truth. "If, I repeat, you were to set me free on that condition [of abandoning the search for truth] I would answer you: Men of Athens, I thank you and I am grateful to you, but I must obey God rather than you, and while I have life and strength, I will never cease to follow wisdom, and urge you forward, explaining to every man of you I meet, and speaking as I have always spoken, saying, 'See here, my friend, you are an Athenian, a citizen of the greatest city in the world, the most famous for wisdom and power; are you not ashamed to care for money and money-making, and fame, and reputation, and not care at all, not making one effort for truth and understanding and the welfare of your soul' . . . 'exhorting all of you, young and old, not to care for your bodies or for money above and beyond your souls and their welfare, telling you that virtue does not come from wealth, but wealth from virtue, even as all other goods, public or private, that man can need.'" Of Death he spoke thus (p. 348, xxxii.): "Death must be one of two things: either it is to have no consciousness at all of anything whatever, or else, as some say,

it is a kind of change or migration of the soul from this world to another. (If it is sleep it is a wonderful gain.) But if it is a journey to another land, if what some say is true and all the dead are really there, if this is so, my judges, what greater good could there be? The joy of meeting with Orpheus, Hesiod, Homer, 'to compare my experience with theirs would be full of pleasure, surely.' And you, too, my judges, must think of death with hope, and remember this at least is true, that no evil can come to a good man in life or death, and that he is not forgotten of God: what has come to me now has come not by chance, but it is clear to me that it is better for me to die and be quit of trouble. When my sons come of age, sirs, will you reprove them and trouble them as I troubled you, if you think they care for money or anything else more than righteousness? And if they seem to be something, when they are really nothing, reproach them as I reproached you for not seeking what they need. . . . But now it is time for us to go, I to death and you to life; and which of us goes to the better state is known to none but God" (Plato, *Apology*).

This unconquerable faith in righteousness, goodness, and God was most manifest in the Great War and gave stability to our Nation as it passed through that awful trial. One young officer wrote to his father on the night before he fell on the field of battle: "Dear Father, If it should be my fate to go under, do not grieve for me, for love stretches over death and makes it only a temporary separation. I have no fear of death. I am going to fight with the assurance of God's goodness, and entrust myself to His care. If it be His will to call me to the higher Existence I shall leave this world without regret, and glad to have been doing my duty to you all and to my country." Another wrote to his mother: "To me Death simply means, I trust, that the life which ceases on earth will be more useful elsewhere: and if one has trusted one's poor existence to Christ till now, why not all the more at the present? I am sure that all the

enemy in creation cannot finish me before one is needed elsewhere for some higher work."

*Hope.*—Hope has been defined as "a supernatural gift by which we trust firmly that God will give us eternal life and the means necessary to obtain it if we do what He requires"; or better, "Hope is a desire for some future good, difficult of attainment, but nevertheless within our reach, joined to a certain confidence that we shall attain it."

*Love.*—Natural Love is the attraction of one person to another by instinct, desire, and temperament. We like them because they attract us, just as we dislike some others because they repel us. Supernatural love is a gift from God which enables us to love those whom we do not like because they are dear to the heart of God. God's love is an Eternal Will to all good for all men. It is by this gift of God that we are able to love our enemies and those who injure us.

Now it is not enough for us to assert with dogmatic precision that God gives us these supernatural gifts of Faith and Hope and Love, that the Holy Spirit, who comes to dwell within us and incorporates us into His Fellowship in Holy Baptism and Confirmation, illuminates our reason and judgment, strengthens our will and kindles our heart. It is not enough to believe and assert these truths with our lips. We must demonstrate them in our lives. Every Christian who believes that the Holy Spirit dwells within him must show the validity of this belief by producing the Fruit of the Spirit. And this ninefold fruit should form the subject of constant and searching self-examination. St. Paul gives the Fruits of the Spirit in Gal. v. 22: "But the Fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering (good temper, forbearance), kindness, goodness (benevolence, generosity), faithfulness (fidelity, trustfulness), meekness (gentleness), temperance" (self-control).

Now this fruit does not grow by magic: it requires the wholehearted response of desire and effort, or heart

and mind and will. The indwelling Spirit liberates our human capacities, as Mr. R. Birch Hoyle points out in his book, *The Holy Spirit in St. Paul*: "It is noteworthy that in the sphere of ethical conduct Paul assumes that the autonomy of the will is preserved even when the Spirit is at work prompting to virtuous action and intensifying faculty. The Spirit does not supersede human personality, but liberates it and gives it strength to exercise its new-found freedom. The working of the Spirit upon the will is not like the unescapable fate of which Greek tragedies speak, nor like a blind force acting irresistibly and mechanically upon unresponsive recipients, nor the suspension of the conscious will as in trance-states and in moments of possession. The entire working is morally and psychologically conditioned. Otherwise there could be no ethical life, for that requires personal freedom of decision. The human will is at work: it is called upon to exercise faith—*i.e.*, be receptive and responsive to the Spirit's prompting" (p. 72). "The essentials for complete ethical personality are knowledge of a perfect ideal, and power to realise it in life, and these are provided by the Spirit. As the principle of knowledge, the Spirit communicates the will of God to man; as the principle of power, He imparts the requisite energy which men themselves do not possess. The ideal standard and the dynamic agency are one and the same. Moreover, the ideal is not some abstraction, but the character of Jesus Christ: it is the personal character of God's perfect Son, who through His own Spirit is at work in human lives, developing in them the virtues and graces which make Him the Son of God's love, and bring them into man's highest estate, sonship to God" (see Gal. iv. 6).

"Love from its awful throne of patient power  
 In the wise heart, from the last giddy hour  
 Of dread endurance, from the slippery steep  
 And narrow verge of crag-like agony springs



And folds over the world its healing wings.  
 Gentleness, virtue, wisdom, and endurance,  
 These are the seals of that most firm assurance  
 Which bars the pit over Destruction's strength;

To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite;  
 To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;  
 To defy Power which seems Omnipotent;  
 To love and bear; to hope till Hope creates  
 From its own wreck the thing it contemplates;  
 Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent;  
 This like thy glory, Titan, is to be  
 Good, great, and joyous; beautiful and free;  
 This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and Victory."

Last stanzas of *Prometheus Unbound*.

P. B. SHELLEY.

## 5. THE CLOUD OF WITNESSES.

"Therefore let us also, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising shame, and hath sat down at the right hand of the Throne of God" (Heb. xii. 1).

Let us consider in this concluding instruction some further aspects of the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church and in the World: for so much confusion has resulted from failing to realise these two aspects of His work. On the one hand, some Christians have tried to believe that the Catholic Church has a monopoly of the Holy Spirit's Presence and Power, a belief not justified by experience; on the other hand, those who recognise the signs of the Holy Spirit's working far beyond His covenanted sphere in the Church, inspiring truth and strengthening goodness in some men in every



religion or irreligion, are inclined to ignore the existence of a definite Church, and to speak of an invisible Church as the only true one. We may hope to avoid both these errors if we adopt the following synthesis which seems justified by Scripture and History.

(i.) *The Invisible Church.*

“In every nation he that feareth Him and worketh justice is acceptable to Him ” (Acts x. 35).

“We have now to ask ourselves: Who are the members on earth of the Invisible Church? And the first answer is simple enough—namely, All those in whose hearts charity is diffused by the Holy Ghost; all those who give God and God’s cause the first, if not always the only, place in their affections; all those who prefer right and truth and duty to father, mother, spouse, children, brethren, kinsfold, home and lands; all those who accept not only with their mind, but with their heart and will, that it profits a man nothing if he gain the whole world to the hurt of his own soul. They may not yet have learnt to love nothing else but in connection with God, and in sympathy with the Divine mind and will; they have undoubtedly yet to be tried and perfected through many tribulations, either here or in Purgatory—for nothing defiled has ever entered Heaven or reached the beatifying stage of love, but at the cost of purifying pain. Still, as long as God weighs down all other treasures heaped together in the balance of their affections, so long do they keep their vital connection with the Mystical Body unsevered; but when singly or collectively creatures are preferred to Him, in that same act they become as severed limbs; for nothing corrupt can enter into or remain in the Kingdom of Heaven ” (George Tyrrell, S.J., *Hard Sayings*, p. 422, 1901).

(ii.) *The Church—the Body of Christ.*

It is a natural and generous desire of benevolence to recognise virtue wherever it is seen, and to say that every good man is a Christian whatever his religion may be,

because in our opinion he is Christlike in his life, and seems to have the Spirit of Christ within him. It is, indeed, right to recognise their likeness to Christ most thankfully and that they show forth the Spirit of Christ. Indeed, it would be a sin against the Holy Ghost not to recognise it and to rejoice in it. But to be like Christ does not make a Mohammedan a Christian. You may say he is a Christian; but he will say he is not. To be Christlike and to have the Spirit of Christ does not make a man a Christian, any more than to be courageous makes a man a soldier. The Church is not the Spirit of Christ, but His Body. If we desire once for all to be relieved from this confusion between the Spirit of Christ and the Body of Christ, we must deliberately face the alternative—"Did Christ intend to institute a body, a corporate Society of Spirit-bearing men and women, which should be His living agent through which He might continue to teach and act for the redemption of the World? or did He not so intend?" The sacramental principle revealed in the Universe, and in the nature of man, and in the method of the Incarnation of the Son of God, all suggest a strong presumption that God would continue to energise in the World by incorporating His Spirit in a Body, and not adopt a new method of action by a disembodied Spirit. This presumption is fully justified by a careful study of the Scriptures in the chronological order of their writing. Beginning with the letters of St. Paul, A.D. 52-63, and the Acts of the Apostles, A.D. 66, we find that within thirteen years of our Lord's Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension, a fully formed Christian Church was in existence, and evidently having been for some time in existence, which shows all the marks of authoritative ministry, creeds, sacraments, and discipline which we associate with the idea of the Catholic Church today. It was not an invisible atmospheric abstraction which nebulously included all who loved our Lord. It was a clear, visible, concrete Body, the Fellowship of the

Twice-born sons of God, the Brotherhood of the Baptised, known and recognised by all, friends and foes alike, a body which could be persecuted, a Fellowship with authoritative teachers and a formulated dogma to be received, and a tradition to be preserved; with a definite outward rite of initiation, and a discipline of expulsion; with carefully guarded mysteries of worship to which none were admitted until they had been baptised and instructed in the faith. This is the Church as it is shown to us in the New Testament, the Mystical Body of Christ, the living fellowship of Spirit-bearing men and women who had been incorporated by baptism in the divine humanity of Jesus, made "one Body with Him" as the Liturgy puts it, bound together in the Fellowship of the Holy Ghost. This is the covenanted sphere of the activities of our Risen and Ascended Lord, the covenanted sphere of the Holy Spirit's energies, the Shrine of God's Presence and Power.

From the beginning, God has always worked by this same method, His election of chosen souls to co-operate with Him in the redemption of the World and their incorporation into a definite body: the chosen Patriarch and his family; the Prophet and chosen people; the promised Messiah with His Messianic Kingdom; the Risen and Ascended Christ with His Holy Catholic Church.

But in every case the election is to opportunity and not to final destiny, for the sake of others and not for our own sake. And in every case the covenant is a restraint on man and not on God. When God promises His Presence and His Grace in a certain way and by certain means in the Body He has formed for that very purpose, this by no means implies a monopoly, that He will never work by any other means or in any other way. When a great surgeon founds a hospital, and promises to place his skill at the service of all who come into the hospital and submit to its discipline, he by no means implies that he will not serve mankind in any other way beyond the covenanted sphere of the hospital. When a learned

professor founds a college and promises to teach all who come to it and submit to its discipline, he by no means implies that he will never for the future teach anyone beyond the limits of his college. Both the surgeon and the professor invariably carry on a vastly important work beyond the covenanted sphere in which they have provided the best conditions for the most perfect exercise of their skill and power.

So—invariably with the covenants of God. The Church is the Body of Christ—but His power flows forth to heal the woman who touches but the hem of His garment. The Church is the Fellowship of the Holy Ghost. But He is actively at work far beyond this sphere of His covenanted activities, in every heart, in every religion, and often amidst the bewildered chaos of those who think they have no religion.

(iii.) *The Church and the Kingdom.*

So while Catholics recognise the awful responsibilities of their election they rejoice to recognise the work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of all men. The Church is the Body of Christ—not His Spirit. His Spirit is rapidly spreading throughout the world, inspiring every soul which is true to the light it has, and eager to welcome whatever further light may come to it. His teaching is accepted as the Standard of Values at every meeting of the League of Nations. His example is leavening every religion and gradually purifying it of corruptions, supplying its defects, correcting its perversions and clarifying its Vision of God. And wherever men in whatever nation, clime, tongue, or kindred, in whatever religion nurtured, reverence God and recognise His dominion over their lives and do righteousness—we rejoice to recognise that they belong to the Kingdom of God, though they may not yet have been incorporated into His Church.

“ Varied and beautiful each with its own special loveliness will be the choirs of God’s elect. Through those

ever-open portals there enters day and night that countless multitude of every people, nation and language—they who in the Church were by His grace faithful to Him, and they who knew not the grace of God, whom the Church below knew not how to win, or alas ! neglected to win them ; but whom Jesus looked upon and the Father drew to Himself, whom His inner light enlightened and who, out of the misery of our fallen state, drawn by His unknown grace, look up yearningly to Him their unknown God, yet still their God, for He made them for Himself. There, out of every religion or irreligion, out of every clime, in whatever ignorance steeped, in whatever hatred or contempt or blasphemy of Christ nurtured, God has His own elect, who ignorantly worship Him, whose ignorant fear or longing He who inspired it will accept.”

## CONCLUSION

### THE SPIRIT OF FREEDOM.

“ Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty.”

### THE TRIUMPH OF THE CHURCH.

“ The triumph of the Christian Church is that it is *there*—that the most daring of all speculative dreams, instead of being found impracticable, has been carried into effect, instead of being confined to a few select spirits, has spread itself over a vast space of the earth’s surface, and when thus diffused, instead of giving place after an age or two to something adapted to a later time, has endured for 2,000 years, instead of lingering as a mere wreck spared by the tolerance of the lovers of the past, still displays vigour and a capacity of adjusting itself to new conditions, and lastly, in all the transformations it undergoes, remains visibly the same thing and inspired by its Founder’s universal and unquenchable spirit ” (*Ecce Homo*, p. 352 ; J. R. Seeley, 1867, Boston, U.S.A.).

In the immediate future it is to be hoped that there will be a revival of attention and devotion to the Holy

Spirit, for He alone can save us from the overwhelming disaster which threatens the race when it forgets God. One foresees two characteristics of the coming age. It will be an Age of Synthesis, and of the Religion of Experience. The nineteenth century was an age of critical analysis pushed to the point of disintegration—a disintegration which affected life in every aspect, economic, political, ethical, and religious. Under the mistaken philosophy of “atomic personality” Society began to disintegrate, the unrestrained competition of individualism pitting man against man, shop against shop, trust against trust, and sect against sect. The twentieth century already seems likely to be an Age of Synthesis. Everywhere there is a cry for Fellowship and Brotherhood, for a new Spirit in Industry, a spirit of Co-operation and Fellowship. All earnest Christians are eagerly praying and working for the Reunion of Christendom. Now this work of Synthesis, of binding together into fellowship, is the special function of the Holy Spirit. He who is the bond between the Father and the Son is also the only bond which will bind the Human Race into one family, and fulfil God’s will of a co-operative Commonwealth of Nations beneath the Fatherhood of God—a Fellowship of the Holy Ghost.

The second characteristic of the coming age will be that no religion will survive except the Religion of Experience. In other ages religion has been accepted on authority without question or criticism, and as a consequence it has rapidly grown corrupt and fallen into decay. Today the searchlight of scientific criticism is testing every dot and comma of our Scriptures, challenging every article of our Creed and dogma, trying every religious emotion. This is an entirely wholesome movement, a surgical operation on which our very life depends, and which will liberate that life into new and vigorous activities. It is the very Presence of God who is a consuming fire and whose Flame of Truth burns up every falsehood, exposes every hypocrisy,



shrivels up all that is adulterated or insincere, "for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins" (Ps. vii. 9). In this hour of crisis and judgment, this ordeal of fire, every man's faith is being tried and tested: all the hay and wood and stubble of emotional superstition and of intellectual pride is being burned up, and only the gold of sincerity and truth can survive. It seems certain that this testing and purification is an indication that God is preparing His Army the Church to make a forward move in its great task of establishing the Kingdom of God on earth. And no soldier is fit to take part in this advance in the Holy War unless he is personally devoted to his King and armed with the Sword of the Spirit.

Christianity has been, and always must be, a religion of authority, because it is not merely an evolution from within, but a bestowal from above, the gift of the Son of God. But this authority must never be arbitrary. It is always moral, rational, and scientific—that is to say, experimental. Our Lord teaches us to accept truth on authority and to justify it by experience. He insists on the experimental method. "If any man willeth to do His Will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God, or whether I speak from myself" (St. John vii. 17). "By their fruits ye shall know them." He insists that every spiritual claim shall be judged by the fruit it bears, that every dogma must produce virtue, and every creed must affect character. "He that doeth the will of my Father, he it is that loveth Me."

There have been ages in the Church's life when she has retired into a fortress, and slumbered securely behind the ramparts and earthworks of privilege, establishment, and endowment; and growing weaker day by day, her rulers are reduced to the ineffectual degradation of buying off the enemy by subtle compromises with the world most skilfully concealed. But today God is calling the Church to issue forth from her fortress, to throw down her earthworks, and rely only on the



Power from on High, the Sword of the Spirit. It is not primarily a matter of the salvation of her life, for the Church is not an end in itself, but a means to the end of the coming of God's Kingdom, of establishing His reign over the hearts of men, and she can only save her life by losing it in the fulfilment of that end. God has been gradually eliminated from many aspects of our Nation's life, from our Schools and Universities, our politics and economics, our commerce and industry, in which there are manifest signs of disintegration and decay. We must enthrone Him as King over every function of human activity. And this task demands that the Church shall leave her fortress, and become an Army on the march in the open country. While within the security of a fortress army life may degenerate into a matter of fixed routine, accurate drill, and ceremonial parade; its weapons grow rusty, for life does not depend on them. But when the Trumpet sounds, which summons us to issue forth to new conquests, the whole Army must become efficient and alert. It must march through unknown country, through deep valleys, across rivers, and range after range of mountains; and as we win one range, new horizons open out to our view, with new obstacles to be overcome, unknown difficulties to be encountered, surprise attacks to be beaten off. While in the fortress life was a weary round of dull routine; everything was known and anticipated. But on the march we move in the stimulating atmosphere of the unforeseen, and the contingent. Our general objective is known: but the means to accomplish this end must be adaptable to an ever-new and ever-changing situation. Victory is dependent on the individual initiative of each soldier, as well as on his loyalty and courage.

Now when in the Holy War the Church moves out upon the march, only a living experience of spiritual reality can equip each soldier for the faithful performance of his duty upon which victory depends. It is not enough for him to be equipped with the right weapons;

he must know how to use them. It is not enough for him to be supplied with the regulation rations; he must know how to cook and assimilate them. It is not enough for a Christian to have a perfectly accurate and orthodox Creed, telling him about God; he must win for himself a living experience of the living God. He must know the Lord Jesus Christ, not merely as a dim, far-off figure who once moved across the stage of History, and is for ever being borne further and further away upon the wings of the receding centuries; he must know Him as a living, loving, present Saviour, in his heart and in his home. He must not be content with a "hearsay" belief that the Holy Spirit is given him in Confirmation; he must know His power, and seek His guidance, and realise His Presence in his heart, so that he may be "full of the Spirit" and "led by the Spirit," and that others may recognise in his life the Fruit of the Spirit. He must not merely know by hearsay that nearly two thousand years ago Christ suffered and died for him; he must know and realise that here and now, today, Christ lives and suffers and dies in his heart, and that whenever he sins the wounds of Christ bleed again. He must not think that some day God will give him Eternal Life: he must realise that here and now, if only he will offer himself in entire self-surrender to God, in heart and mind and will—here and now his Eternal Life begins: for this *is*—not this shall be—but "This is Life Eternal; that they should know Thee, the only true God, and Him whom Thou didst send, even Jesus Christ." It is the Holy Spirit's gracious work to shed abroad the love of God in our hearts, to illuminate each individual soul with this Light of Life, to interpret the Living Christ to the soul until this experience is won, and to bind souls together in a living unity, the Fellowship of the Holy Ghost—"I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected into one; that the world may know that Thou didst send Me, and lovedst them, even as Thou lovedst Me" (St. John xvii. 23).

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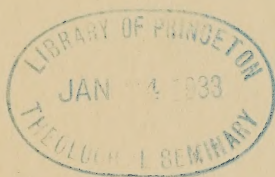


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